Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Daily Report
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FBIS-SOV-96-066 *4 April 1996*

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Russia: Chechen Rebel Envoy To Meet Tatarstan President in Kazan

LD0304143296 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1218 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Interfax) — A leader of the Chechen Moscow diaspora will leave for Kazan within a day or two to meet President of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaymiyev on consent of Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, a source in the Dudayev circle told Interfax Wednesday.

He said they will focus on the mediating mission of the Tatarstan leader to organize negotiations between Dudayev and the federal authorities.

The envoy, who is a member of the Dudayev "presidential council," helped to establish informal contacts between separatists and the Russian government early last year. These efforts resulted in official negotiations and the agreement of June 30, 1995.

Dudayev is ready for negotiations with Shaymiyev, if the latter is given special powers at a rank no lower than Russian Deputy Prime Minister.

Despite press reports on Dudayev's negative reaction to the new settlement plan of Moscow, his circle is considering members of the Chechen delegation to the talks.

The source said the delegation will hardly be headed by Khozh-Akhmed Yarikhanov, whose activities at last year's negotiations in Groznyy dissatisfied Dudayev.

Military issues will be discussed by head of the Chechen staff Aslan Maskhadov, as it was in 1995, said the Dudayev supporter.

Russia: Chechen Leaders Want OSCE at Signing of Peace Treaties

LD0304204496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1759 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, April 3 (Interfax) — Chechen leaders called on the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] mission observers in the Chechen capital of Groznyy to attend the signing of peace and concord treaties with the republic's villages.

Chechen Prime Minister Doku Zavgayev Tuesday made this proposal and said that the OSCE role has thus far been confined to attempts at mediation. Abdula Bugayev, first deputy prime minister of Chechnya, told Interfax Wednesday.

Bugayev did not think that the OSCE could do much more but believed that it should step up its activiites, especially so because Yeltsin's peace plan calls for this.

Bugayev said that numerous people, especially in the West, doubt the desirability of the treaties but if OSCE observers were involved in this initiative, the signatories would have more confidence in the treaties.

Russia: Yeltsin Replies to Readers on Dudayev, Sevastopol

LD0404064696 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0613 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 4 (Itar-Tass) — The Chechen Republic is "a full-fledged subject of the Russian Federation," said President Boris Yeltsin, replying to questions by readers of the ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI newspaper in its Thursday's issue.

"The Chechen people have been living inseparably with the Russian people and other peoples of Russia for over a century," the president added.

Terrorists of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev only don the robes of national liberation fighters, the Russian leader noted.

In real fact, "it is more appropriate to compare Dudayevism with such notorious criminal entities as the Medellin cartel in Colombia or "the golden triangle" in South East Asia. The Chechen people, above all, has been suffering from Dudayevism", Yeltsin continued.

Asked about the problem of Sevastopol, the president stated that, "from the viewpoint of international law on which relations between present-day Russia and Ukraine should be built, all legal problems (borders, debts, etc.) should be settled only on a contractual basis.

"This is precisely what happens with all matters connected with Sevastopol and the Russian Black Sea Fleet. Progress is difficult, but there is no other reasonable way out, apart from contractual," the Russian leader stressed.

Yeltsin noted that he is a firm advocate of holding elections, both in June 1996 and subsequently. Every four years. This must become a norm. The closest elections are especially important. "We shall elect Russia's future, without exaggeration, in June," the chief executive emphasised.

"I'm sure that Russians will have enough reason and memory to make the correct choice, despite all difficulties," the president noted.

Yeltsin also dealt with social issues in his replies to readers.

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Russia: Yeltsin Appoints Emil Pain Head of Chechnya Working Group

LD0304151796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1430 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 3 Apr (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin issued an instruction today endorsing the provision on a working group under the Russian president to conclude hostilities and settle the situation in Chechnya. Emil Pain, member of the Presidential Council, has been entrusted with leading the group. This was reported today by the head of state's press service.

According to the provision, the working group under the Russian president to conclude hostilities and settle the situation in Chechnya is "a consultative body under the Russian president providing information and analysis in support of implementation of the program to settle the crisis in the Chechen Republic," notes the release by the Yeltsin's press service.

Russia: Dudayev Receives Text of Yeltsin Settlement Decree

LD0304142396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1218 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SOUTH CHECHNYA, April 3 (Interfax) — Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev received the full text of President Yeltsin's settlement decree Tuesday night [2 April], a source close to Dudayev told Interfax Wednesday.

However, the source declined to say whether Dudayev will soon answer the presidential peace plan.

Despite the order to stop intensive military operations, "they resumed with special brutality," he said.

Dudayev's closest supporters believe that "any of Moscow's initiatives cannot be trusted," he said.

Russia: Grachev 'Fully' Supports Yeltsin Peace Plan for Chechnya

LD0304132196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1240 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Anatoliy Yurkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Itar-Tass) — Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev told journalists today, commenting on President Yeltsin's decree on settlement in Chechnya that "as far as measures for Chechen settlement suggested by the president are concerned, we fully support proposals for peaceful settlement of the conflict."

At the same time, Grachev stressed that "it is not the business of the military to discuss orders, their task is to fulfill them."

Commenting on concrete measures for the realization of Boris Yeltsin's proposals for the normalization of the situation in the area of the Chechen conflict, Grachev stressed that the troops remain for the time being in the positions where they had been prior to April 1.

Russia: Yeltsin's Peace Plan Draws Mixed Response From Chechens

MK0404115996 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 4 Apr 96 p 3

[Report by Mekhman Gafarly: "The Road to Accord Is Still Long"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The address by Russian President Boris Yeltsin has drawn mixed reaction from Chechnya's political elite. Proponents of full independence for the Chechen Republic — Ikhvan Gerikhanov, ex-chairman of the Constitutional Court and member of the "Roundtable" of Chechnya's public-political movements; Mustafa Edilbeyev, chairman of the "Gulam" public-political movement; and Leychi Abukhadzhiyev, "Roundtable" member — stated at a press conference in the Federation of Peace and Accord (FMS) building [date not given] that Boris Yeltsin's plan to settle the Chechen crisis is purely rhetorical in nature. They explained their stance by saying that the Russian president's address contains no actual mechanisms for achieving peace. This much is also confirmed by ongoing combat operations. As participants in the press conference noted, despite Yeltsin's announcement that troop operations on the territory of Chechnya should stop at 2400 on 31 March, bombing of villages in the Nozhay-Yurt and Achkhoy-Martan Rayons still continues. According to participants in the press conference, federal troops deport and destroy civilians under the pretense of flushing out gunmen from population centers. The Chechen side proposed to eliminate screening camps for "suspect" civilians because the fate of people ending up there is unknown; many are listed as missing. All supporters of the Chechen resistance movement, as they refer to themselves, demand an immediate pullout of Russian troops from the territory of the republic, otherwise it will be difficult to avoid armed clashes in the future. "Gulam" leader Mustafa Edilbeyev thinks that armed clashes will continue unless there are direct talks between President Boris Yeltsin and President Dzhokhar Dudayev.

Edilbeyev's words on the need for direct talks between Yeltsin and Dudayev can be described as sensational. It should be noted that the "Gulam" movement was

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in opposition during the period of Dudayev's rule and its leader Mustafa Edilbeyev was sentenced to death for an attempted coup. This attests to the fact that a continuation of combat operations in Chechnya rallies to Dudayev even his enemies of yesterday. In the event of Moscow's further attempts to unravel the Chechen knot militarily, Russia will meet with even more solid resistance.

Ruslan Khasbulatov, whose statement was circulated in the course of the press conference, came up with unequivocal criticism of Yeltsin's plan to settle the Chechen crisis. The statement of the former Russian parliament speaker says that "Yeltsin's plan" has no fundamental basis for achieving peace, since it does not take account of the actual situation in Chechnya and those differences which, from the point of view of the warring sides, contribute to the continuation of the military conflict. "If Yeltsin wanted to shift the conflict from a military level to a political level," Khasbulatov thinks, "he would immediately appoint an authorized delegation to conduct talks with the Chechen resistance."

In the meantime, FMS Deputy Chairman Andrey Melvil, who chaired the news briefing, stated that the statements heard from the Chechen side were not the FMS's point of view at all. In Mr. Melvil's words, although Yeltsin's plan has many flaws in it, the FMS supports it on the whole, because it sees the plan as a piece of tangible proof of the head of state's intentions to resolve the Chechen conflict peacefully.

Russia: Army Seen Largely Ignoring Yeltsin's Chechnya Plan

MK0404110596 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 4 Apr 96 p 3

[Article by Igor Korotchenko under the general headline: "Peace Will Hardly Come Before Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA informants in the General Staff, main commands of branches of armed services, and in the Moscow Military District staff, the plan for settling the Chechen crisis announced by Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin has drawn negative reactions in the majority of Russian Army garrisons. Summing up the overall sentiment of the military people, one can say that most of them condemn the supreme commander's decision to begin withdrawing federal forces from Chechnya while recognizing Dzhokhar Dudayev as a legitimate negotiating partner.

In private conversations with your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observer, staffers of the Defense Ministry central apparatus used extremely sharp expressions to describe what they thought about the Kremlin's peacemaking efforts. As far as one can judge, the president of Russia may soon be left without the support of a majority of those who work for the Russian Federation Defense Ministry and General Staff — and who say they are going to vote on 18 June 1996 "for anyone but Yeltsin."

According to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA information, a number of company- and battalion-level officers in combat units deployed on the territory of the North Caucasus Military District are voicing their disaffection with Boris Yeltsin's latest decisions publicly and are discussing it openly among their fellow officers. A similar situation is shaping up in some elite divisions of the Moscow Military District, where statements to the effect that "if they bring us to Moscow once again this summer, we will think yet again about which side to shoot at," are not infrequent.

The men in the General Staff are, incidentally, confident that Dudayev and those around him will continue their extremely tough and aggressive stance with regard to Moscow, which makes more than probable the resumption soon of wide-scale military operations between federal forces and illegal armed formations, as well as terrorist acts by Chechen fighters against transportation, energy, and communications facilities in central Russia. Commanders of Russian units and subunits in Chechnya will either simply ignore a number of orders and directives from Moscow or quietly obstruct them under one pretext or another.

Given the chronic failure to pay servicemen the monetary allowances due them, the ever-growing antigovernment sentiment in garrisons threatens to take forms dangerous to the authorities. It is obviously for this reason that special departments of the Russian Federation FSB [Federal Security Service], which permeate the Russian Army from the General Staff down to a remote garrison of the Transbaykal Military District, have received Lubyanka's instructions to step up monitoring the moods in the officers' corps.

Russia: Russians Said Bombing Villages That Signed Peace Accords

MK0404105496 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 4 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Abubakar Demilkhanov and Lema Turpalov under the general headline: "Peace Will Hardly Come Before the Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The situation in Chechnya is not getting any calmer after the Russian Federation president unveiled a program to settle the crisis. Bombings

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continue of villages in the Nozhay-Yurt and Vedeno Rayons and shelling is going on of localities in Shali and Urus-Martan Rayons.

The agreement on peace and accord signed by the administration and elders of the village of Shalazhi in Urus-Martan Rayon with the military command held just for a few hours. Having signed a peace agreement on 2 April, the people of Shalazhi heaved a sigh of relief, thinking that the war was over as far as they were concerned. But bombs fell on residential areas at 0100 on 3 April. Aviation delivered strikes for two hours. There are casualties; a considerable part of the village was destroyed; two streets were wiped out.

The deputy premier of the Chechen Republic government, Yunadi Usamov, who signed the agreement on behalf of the official Chechen authorities, told your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent that Shalazhi has always been opposed to Dzhokhar Dudayev and no armed militia [opolchentsy] units have ever been deployed on its territory. This rules out the possibility of provocative raids of fighters from the village.

A group was created to investigate the incident, but according to specialists, the investigation will hardly turn up anything, as in the case of the recent bombing of the Katyr-Yurt village. There is an obvious regularity: Villages that have signed the agreement on peace are coming under fire. It is unlikely that Dzhokhar Dudayev has the ability to deliver air strikes. It can only be concluded that the military people are pressing on with broad-scale actions using aviation and heavy artillery despite the cease-fire announced by the Russian Federation president. Usamov thinks the military people are pursuing the objective of derailing the peace process in Chechnya.

Russia: Federal Forces' Commander Denies Attack on Shalazhi

LD0304185296 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1700 GMT 3 Apr 96

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] News agency reports have been coming in since this morning that the village of Shalazhi in Chechnya came under fire overnight. According to ITAR-TASS correspondent Alvik Karimov, federal forces were involved. It is worth noting that throughout the war there have never been rebels in this village. Not only that, but on Tuesday, the village signed an agreement on peace and accord. A strange situation. This is the second time such a tragedy has occurred immediately after Chechen villagers have signed a peace deal with the Russian command. We have tried to get to the bottom of this issue.

Lieutenant General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, commanding officer of the group of federal forces in Chechnya, said he has not given any orders to open fire and the troops under his command have not opened fire. We then turned to the interior troops' command. Gen Anatoliy Shkirko, the commanding officer himself, is right now in Chechnya, we were told. His first deputy, Viktor Gafarov, rang through to Khankala and gave us this answer: There was indeed an explosion between four and five this morning, but the federal troops have absolutely nothing to do with it. He assumed it was a provocation by Dudayev's side, especially since Dudayev himself said on Tuesday that the war will continue to the last Chechen, or until the federal forces completely withdraw from the republic.

Our correspondent Aleksandr Onosovskiy was able to interview Petr Deynekin, commanding officer [CO] of the Russian Air Force, on this subject.

[begin recording] [Deynekin] There have not been any missions to bomb or strafe any populated area, including Shalazhi village, and neither can there be.

[Onosovskiy] The CO made that statement on the basis of operational records. True, he has only been briefed orally, but he will receive all the papers required under the circumstances within the next few hours. It has to be said that 600 various parameters and even the pilot's pulse are recorded by instruments during a flight.

[Deynekin] Analysis of these records from our bomber crews shows that they have not carried out any bombing runs against Shalazhi. I believe them. They have flown in that area many times and on occasions lost their colleagues. Over 40 of our aircraft have returned to base with significant damage from rebel anti-aircraft fire. The aircrews certainly would not lie to me.

[Onosovskiy] The CO believes this is just another provocation by the pro-Dudayev camp, which has been hit hard by air power recently.

[Deynekin] Without visual contact with the aircraft from the target zone, there is no way of telling whether they are fighters or bombers and what ordnance they are using — rockets or bombs.

[Onosovskiy] Or how many aircraft there are?

[Deynekin] Especially how many aircraft and the amount of ordnance. So, the commission which will be investigating at the scene of the incident will, I hope, give us an objective account of what happened. [video shows Deynekin, captioned as commander in chief

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of the Russian Air Force, in uniform sitting at desk in office; also shown are a map with coordinates and locations written on it, radar picture with Shalazhi's location marked, another map with title visible: "Strike mission zone for 0009 to 0130 Moscow time 3 April 96"] [end recording]

Russia: Afghan Taleban Offers Tatar Aviation Crew to Dudayev

*NC0304*04296 Baku TURAN in English*
1210 GMT 3 Apr 96

["Taleban Movement Announced About Readiness To Convey the Crew of Russian Plane Il-76 to Dzhokhar Dudayev"—TURAN headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku/03.04.96/TURAN—Lately representatives of the Chechen Republic-Ichkeria met with leaders of Afghan movement Taleban. They discussed question of mutual interest. During the talks, as a token of recognition of deserves of the Chechen people in their fight for independence, the Talebs expressed readiness to pass to Dzhokhar Dudayev seven members of the crew of Tatars aviation company kept by Talebans for eight months. Leaders of Talebs said that this step could help somehow in peaceful resolution of the Russian-Chechen war.

According to Vaha Ibrahimon, representative of the President Dudayev, who took part in the talks this proposal was accepted by Chechnya with interest and in the near future Dzhokhar Dudayev will express his attitude to it.

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CIS: Quadripartite, Bilateral Treaties Compared

MM0304154396 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Commentary by Otto Latsis: "Extremely Deep Integration Raises Questions: Comparing the 'Treaty of the Two' with the 'Treaty of the Four'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Treaty on the Formation of the Community of Belarus and Russia was signed in Moscow 2 April, just four days after the signing of the Treaty on Deepening Integration Among Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

If the CIS means integration and the "union of the four" means deepened integration, the bilateral Community means, it must be assumed, extremely deep integration. The timeliness and the well-considered nature of the quadripartite treaty is not in question. But why was a bilateral treaty required at the same time?

The IZVESTIYA editorial office possesses the text of the quadripartite treaty and a draft of the bilateral treaty as it was 24 hours prior to signing (presumably no fundamental changes were made to it). Let us try to compare the two texts and determine what the "Treaty of the Two" contains that is new compared with the "Treaty of the Four."

This is how Article 1 of the quadripartite treaty defines its purpose: "With the aim of creating in the long term a Community of Integrated States...." The corresponding clause in Article 1 of the bilateral treaty reads as follows: "...for the purpose of combining the material and intellectual potential of their states to develop the economy and create equal conditions for the improvement of the living standards of their people and the spiritual development of the individual."

With regard to economic reforms the quadripartite treaty envisages the "coordination of the basic guidelines, stages, and timetables," while the bilateral treaty points out that "the Parties shall synchronize by the end of 1997 the stages, timetables, and depth" of reforms.

As regards the regulations governing investments and state support of production, according to the quadripartite treaty: "The Parties shall jointly elaborate and implement a system of measures"; according to the bilateral treaty, they "shall develop a unified system."

The bilateral treaty envisages that measures to form a common transport system with uniform tariffs and a joint power supply system be carried out by the end of 1996. This topic is missing from the quadripartite treaty.

The provisions of both documents on the coordination of structural policy coincide almost word for word, but the bilateral treaty has added the following to this pretty general provision: "The transition to the drawing up of joint balance sheets of production capacities and to their agreed use in the Parties' interest will be effected as of 1997."

The quadripartite treaty says: "The Parties shall consistently step up the coordination of policy in the monetary-credit and currency-finance spheres" but will introduce a single currency only in "subsequent stages" in accordance with the degree of integration achieved. The bilateral treaty says: "The unification of the Parties' monetary, credit, and budgetary systems shall be carried out and conditions created for the introduction of a common currency by the end of 1997."

The quadripartite treaty envisages that "The Parties shall pursue a coordinated social policy, harmonize national systems of social protection, and gradually equalize levels of pensions...." The bilateral treaty points out that the Parties "shall ensure the enjoyment of equal rights by the citizens of the Parties in obtaining education, employment, and labor remuneration and in the granting of other social guarantees," "introduce uniform standards of social welfare," "equalize conditions of pension provision," and "unify norms in the sphere of labor protection, social insurance, and industrial and public health."

The parties to the quadripartite treaty have undertaken to finance the upkeep of the integration administration organs — no other common funds are envisaged. The bilateral treaty envisages that the Community budget will be formed out of annual deductions from the state budgets of the parties, which will be channeled toward financing common programs and the upkeep of Community organs.

Finally, as regards the defense sphere the quadripartite treaty is extremely cautious and even rhetorical: "In the light of accumulated experience of cooperation the Parties shall improve the mechanism for coordination of action during (...) the creation and strengthening of the common system for ensuring security and the protection of state borders."

The bilateral treaty says: "They shall collaborate to ensure the security and protection of the borders..." and "work out general principles governing military organizational development and the use of elements of military infrastructure...."

What, then, is the common denominator in all this? It is perfectly obvious that the treaties are close in spirit and envisage movement in a single direction. Only the Belarus-Russian treaty offers faster movement, more precise timetables, and tighter wording. You might wonder, what could be better than the rapid achievement of your desired aim? There is only one answer here —

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the reliable achievement of that aim. We have already lived in a very close union — than which there was none closer. But the unreliability of its foundations eventually led to its collapse, which produced the kind of tragedy which we would not wish to live through again.

Here we have, for example, "synchronization" of the stages and timetable of reforms instead of the more cautious "coordination." If, say, Belarus wishes to delay any stages (as is now happening), will Russia also put on the brake a little? And if not, what scope for influencing its partner does the treaty afford in that case?

The use of elements of the western partner's military infrastructure is undoubtedly strategically important for Russia. But how much will we have to pay for this, and what are the guarantees that we will pay only for what we really need?

What does the planned common currency mean? Something akin to the West European ECU, which functions in parallel with national currencies, is one thing; the attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable — having one currency in two countries but without giving up two currency emission centers or the two countries' national sovereignty — which was almost implemented once before in Russian-Belarusian relations — is quite another.

The detailed commitments regarding equalizing and unifying social guarantees look very attractive. But who will pay for the equalization if one of the countries starts to lag? The question becomes redundant once you remember that Russia's population numbers 147 million while Belarus' numbers 9 million. Let us also bear in mind that the Russian Government is unable at present to correct the glaring social contrasts on the territory of its own country. Will we sooner or later have to undertake this undoubtedly noble task on an international scale?

It should be acknowledged that one provision of the bilateral treaty is enigmatic, namely the aforementioned phrase about drawing up joint balances of production capacities and their "agreed use." Such balances are a purely Gosplan [State Planning Committee] task, which is hardly conceivable in a market economy. Russia has no national balances of this kind remaining — how will we draw up joint ones? Won't this mean a step backward rather than a step forward?

It is difficult to rid yourself of the idea that this all conceals not just understandable haste in the desire to attain this noble aim. Let us recall the recent speeches by the president of Belarus, who interpreted this provision of the treaty under preparation very freely. They elicited not just polite clarifications from the Russian side but also provoked protest demonstrations on the streets of Minsk, and this does not exactly benefit the cause of integration.

Let us note, moreover, a provision which is, in contrast, missing from the draft bilateral treaty, although it is contained in the quadripartite treaty: the duration of the treaty and the possibility of abrogating it. Silence here clearly implies the treaty is forever. Whence such certainty?

But perhaps all this quibbling is beside the point, given that we whose homeland was the Soviet Union are so keen that our common fatherland should return in a different and really new form within our own lifetime. Won't the strengthening of the will of the state help here? Wishful thinking, however, never helps the cause.

CIS: Defense Ministries To Expand Military-Technical Cooperation

LD0304182896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1454 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Sergey Ostanin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Itar-Tass) — Defense Ministries of member-states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are going to expand cooperation in creating and introducing technologies for the utilisation of armaments, military equipment and ammunition unfit for use. The working out of a draft document setting out the basis tendencies of this cooperation was discussed at a meeting of the Military-Technical Committee at the Staff of Military Cooperation of CIS member-states, Itar-Tass learned from the press service of the Staff.

Representatives of the Defence Ministries of 12 Commonwealth states, as well as experts of the Interstate economic committee of the Economic Union of the CIS, the Russian Ministry for Cooperation with CIS member-countries and a number of Russian state committees and scientific institutions participated in the meeting of the Military-Technical Committee which is one of the permanent structures on the Staff.

The draft programme of military-technical cooperation of CIS countries was discussed and adopted at the meeting. The draft will be referred for the endorsement to the Council of Defence Ministries of CIS countries in June 1996. Among priority tasks of military-technical cooperation participants in the conference described the work on the concept of providing information about daily activities and automatisation of control in the armed forces of CIS countries.

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CIS: ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 4 Apr

LD0404052896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0505 GMT 4 Apr

["Press Review" — ITAR-TASS headline]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, April 4 (Itar-Tass) — Follows a review of Thursday's Moscow-based newspapers dated April 4.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on Boris Yeltsin's answers to readers' letters.

The Chechen republic is a full-fledged subject of the Russian Federation, Yeltsin stated in response to questions asked by the newspaper's readers. Dudayev terrorists only pose as fighters for national liberation. In actual fact, Dudayevism can rather be likened to such well-known criminal entities as the Medellin cartel in Colombia or the Golden Triangle in South-East Asia. It is primarily the Chechen people themselves who have suffered and continue to suffer from Dudayevism, the Russian president pointed out.

Yeltsin also answered questions about the Sevastopol issue, the forthcoming presidential elections, and social problems.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on Yeltsin's being registered as a presidential candidate for a second term.

The essence of the incumbent president's election campaign period is primarily to exercise Constitutional powers and only in the second place to campaign for his re-election for a second term.

Herein is both his strength as presidential contender for a second term and his vulnerability. Yeltsin's forte as the holder of the top office is that he is not "a cat in the bag". Now everyone can judge Yeltsin precisely as the president: his merits or weak points as the head of state are seen to everyone. Speculations about his "unpredictability" are nothing more than a myth. Of all contenders for the presidency, Yeltsin is the most predictable one and this alone is a great advantage in his election struggle.

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the signing of the Russia-Belarus treaty.

"The signing of the Russia-Belarus Treaty on Deep Integration is an illustration that centuries-old all-round contacts between the two peoples again become an effective factor in our joint life," the newspaper quotes Chief of the Presidential Staff Nikolay Yegorov as saying.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA states that the Treaty on the Founding of a Community of Russia and Belarus is a reflection of the historical unity of the two peoples.

IZVESTIYA questions the legitimacy of pronouncements that integration within the framework of a community of two or four (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan) should develop after the pattern of the European Union.

IZVESTIYA on developments in Chechnya.

The newspaper's correspondent reports that rumours are rife in Chechnya that "Russia has thrown Cossack battalions against Dudayev militants".

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA's journalists published a letter in which they point out that the Russian Ministry of Defence stubbornly refuses to make available to the editorial office a list of the names of those who perished in Chechnya.

The newspaper also reports that Dudayev militants demanded a ransom of 200,000 US dollars for Chechen Minister of Education Yefim Gelman, who had been taken hostage in November last year.

PRAVDA on check-ups of privatisation procedures.

The newspaper maintains that two unprecedented-in-scope and thoroughness inspections, carried out by the Control Department to the president of Russia and the accounting chamber of the State Duma, have revealed a good deal of "accomplishments" by domestic privatisers.

The inspectors were appalled at the facility and uncontrolledness through which damage had been done to the State; at the extent of the damage which defies description in terms of money, and at the simplicity of ways by means of which privatisers personally made use of the results of the privatisation effected by them.

IZVESTIYA carries an article by its Washington correspondent, who reports that on the eve of the presidential election in the United States, the opponents of President Clinton are playing the Russian card. The US Congress intends to inquire into the "deal" struck between the American and Russian presidents in Sharm al-Shaykh.

"The authenticity of the notes raises no doubts, for they were made by the hand of Strobe Talbott, the administration's main authority on 'Soviet affairs' and a close friend of the president".

PRAVDA on a US National ABM [Antiballistic Missile] Bill.

The newspaper runs a dispatch by its Washington correspondent under the headline "The Undermining of the ABM Treaty". The dispatch has it that "a bill advocating the establishment of a national anti-missile defence system of the USA has been initiated in the US Congress".

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Russia: Fears Worsening Over Situation in Korea

LD0404081496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0847 GMT 4 Apr 96

[By Andrey Kirillov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Itar-Tass) — A Russian delegation led by Vice-Premier of the Government of the Russian Federation Vitaliy Ignatenko leaves for Pyongyang to discuss Russia's concern over the possible worsening of the situation on the Korean peninsula and even fear of possible clashes between North and South, as well as to resume dialogue on trade and economic cooperation between Russia and North Korea within three framework of the inter-governmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation between Russia and North Korea.

"We think a crisis is likely to develop around the agreement on the demilitarized zone. Even clashes are not ruled out," Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Panov told Itar-Tass.

"Unfortunately, a pattern has emerged: a situation is first brought to a head, an explosion or a crisis, and efforts to normalise it are taken thereafter," Panov said.

"Our approach is quite different. There is a mass of problems — let us tackle them in a civilised way and look for a solution to the package," he said.

"The Korean problem requires participation of many countries. If all concerned parties, including the United Nations, pool their efforts, a formula can be found which will be acceptable to all," he said.

"We do forecast a possible aggravation of the situation but we hope that it will not go as far as direct clashes," the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister said.

Panov was speaking ahead of the first meeting of the inter-governmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation between Russia and North Korea [which] will be held in Pyongyang from April 10 through 12.

Concomitantly with the meeting of the commission, bilateral political consultations at the level of deputy foreign ministers will be held in the North Korean capital.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Panov told Itar-Tass, "We shall discuss everything — bilateral relations and international issues. The aim of the meeting is to resume and continue dialogue between Russia and North Korea."

He noted that the situation on the Korean peninsula will naturally be in the focus, particularly in view of the recent statement by North Korea about the impossibility to abide by the truce agreement.

"We have much to speak about," the Russian deputy Minister said. As concerns ways of peaceful settlement of the Korean problem, Panov said Russia's proposal for holding a multi-lateral international conference on security in the region remained the best possible solution.

"We understand that it is difficult to organise, and some people take it hard, but there is nothing better," the Russian diplomat stressed.

He said Russia and China had an identical, "absolutely identical" approach to the Korean issue. China and Russia believe that the old system must be kept in place until a new system is created to ensure security on the Korean peninsula.

"It is necessary to conduct dialogue and negotiations," the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister said. "Dialogue between two Koreas is very important. We hope that the partners will realise the need for talks the further the better," Panov added.

Russia: Yeltsin To View Military-Technological Cooperation in China

LD0304174196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1515 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin will discuss military technological cooperation with China during his official visit there on April 24 to 26, a Russian government staff member told Interfax Wednesday.

Russia's state-run arms dealer Rosvooruzhenie made a giant step in this direction as it licensed China to produce Su-27 interceptors worth about $2.5 billion.

Yeltsin will also discuss other, more important issues in China, the government source said. Military technological cooperation is only one part of comprehensive bilateral cooperation, he said.

Russia may supply energy and other equipment for Chinese installations for as much as $6 billion until 1996.

Russian supplies for the construction of a nuclear power plant in Liaoning with a capacity of 2,000 megawatts will account for the bulk of this amount. The supplies will be made under a Russian state loan of $2.5 billion, negotiated on December 18, 1992.

Russia's supplies of equipment to China in 1996 and the following two or three years will exceed $2 billion, he said.

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Among promising joint projects, the source cited Russia's possible involvement in the construction of Asia's biggest energy complex San Sia in Hubei. The complex will be equipped with 26 turbines with a capacity of 700 megawatts each.

More in the Interfax Diplomatic Panorama of April 3, while the full text will be published in the Interfax Business Weekly of April 5.

Russia: Yeltsin Answers Questions on Ukraine, Elections

LD0304210396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2034 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 4 (Itar-Tass) — The Chechen republic is a full member of the Russian Federation and its people have been living in an unbreakable bond with Russian people for more than 100 years, Russian President Boris Yeltsin said on Wednesday.

In his replies to voters' questions, to be published by the newspaper Rossiyskiye Vesti on Thursday, Yeltsin said that "(Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar) Dudayev's terrorists only disguise themselves as fighters for national liberation. In reality, Dudayevism can be compared with such well-known criminal organisations as the Medellin cartel or the 'golden triangle' in southeast Asia. It is the Chechen people who have suffered and continue to suffer from Dudayevism."

Asked about the Black Sea fleet issue, the Russian president said that from the point of view of international law, upon which relations between Russia and Ukraine should be built, such legal problems (including borders, debts and other issues) should be settled through agreements.

"And this is what is being done with regard to all that is connected with the Sevastopol issue and the Russian Black Sea fleet. It is not an easy task, but there is no other way," he said.

Yeltsin confirmed that he firmly supported the idea of holding elections not only in June 1996, but also in the future each four years.

"This must become a norm. Especially important are the upcoming elections. In June we will elect, without any exaggeration, the future of Russia. I am confident that Russian people will have enough wisdom and memory in order to make the right choice despite all difficulties," he said.

"The future of Russia will depend on how people will vote." Yeltsin told journalists earlier today after registration by the Central Election Commission as a presidential candidate.

"They may vote to continue to govern the state or they may vote to be deprive of such a right. I hope for their wisdom. I hope they love their country and will cast their ballots for the benefit of Russia so that everybody will win, Russia will win," he said.

Asked whether he feared loosing the elections, the president said "of course I am worried, but I will fight for this post. This will not be an easy fight because I have a strong opponent. But am not afraid and I will fight in earnest."

"This is a very responsible moment for me because these are the third elections to be held in a democratic way as they would be held in any democratic country," the president said at the registration ceremony.

After studying all registration documents — the final protocol of a meeting of the initiative group which had nominated Yeltsin, his application confirming his consent to run for reelection, an income statement for the last two years and lists of more than 1,300,000 signatures — the commission unanimously voted to register Yeltsin as a presidential candidate for a second term.

Commission chairman Nikolay Ryabov presented Yeltsin with a registration certificate making him the second officially registered candidate for presidency. Earlier, the commission had registered Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov as a presidential candidate.

Yeltsin said that this was "an unusual day" for him. "In the old times, the Central Election Commission's certificates were brought to the candidates' offices and they were always No.1. The commission chairman accompanied by two people came to a candidate's office and presented him with a certificate."

"Now certificates have no number. However, mine says 'candidate for President of the Russian Federation for a second term'. No other candidate has such an inscription. But as you can see, I have arrived here for a meeting of the Central Election Commission without any ambitions in order to hear its decision and receive my certificate," Yeltsin said.

The Russian leader said he would make his income statement available to the press so that people could know everything about their president.

According to the income statement for 1994, the president's total earnings were 552,331,580 roubles. Royalties for his book published in Britain made up a

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lion's share of that amount, 537,000,040 roubles. His net salary was 15,291,580 roubles.

In 1995, Yeltsin received 26,784,596 roubles and paid 4,309,216 roubles in taxes.

Asked about wage arrears, the president said he had kept his first promise he had given as a candidate — all debts of the federal budget had been paid.

"I want to report to you for March, for what I promised in Yekaterinburg in mid-February that we would pay all debts to the budget sector in March. All regions have received 100 per cent of what they are entitled to. The military, coal miners and all other categories of the population have been paid. Only private companies are left, but the state bears no responsibility for them. So I have kept my promise," he said.

Yeltsin said he had agreed with his economic adviser Alexander Livshits to report about the payment of wages in April each morning.

Russia: Decree on Nuclear Materials Shipment Agreement With Ukraine

MM0404100196 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 9

[Russian Federation Government 28 February 1996 decree no. 225 "On the Conclusion of an Agreement Between the Russian Federation Government and the Ukraine Government on Cooperation in the Field of the Transportation of Nuclear Materials"; from "Documents" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow — With a view to putting in order shipments of nuclear materials between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, the Russian Federation Government decrees that:

The attached draft agreement between the Russian Federation Government and the Ukraine Government on cooperation in the field of the transportation of nuclear materials (attached) [footnote] [not published] submitted by the Russian Federation Ministry for Atomic Energy and supported by the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry, the Russian Federation Internal Affairs Ministry, the Russian Federation Ministry of Railroads, the Russian Federation Ministry for the Conservation of the Environment and Natural Resources, the Russian Federation Ministry for Cooperation with the CIS States, the Russian Federation Ministry for Civil Defense Affairs, Emergency Situations, and the Elimination of the Consequences of Natural Disasters, the Russian Federation State Customs Committee, the Russian Federal Inspectorate for Nuclear and Radiation Safety, and the Russian Federation Federal Border Service and agreed on a preliminary basis with the Ukrainian Side is to be approved.

The Russian Federation Ministry for Atomic Energy is to be instructed to sign this agreement on behalf of the Russian Federation Government, authorizing the introduction to the attached draft of changes and additions not of a fundamental nature.

[signed] V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government

Russia: Yeltsin Aide Ryurikov Discusses New Union With Belarus

LD0304163196 Moscow NTV in Russian 1535 GMT 2 Apr 96

[From the "Hero of the Day" program by announcer Yevgeniy Kiselev]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Another "Hero of the Day" program is on the air. Yevgeniy Kiselev is in the studio. Good evening! As of today, we, I mean both citizens of Russia and citizens of Belarus, are living in the SSR [Soobshchestvo suverennikh respublik: Community of Sovereign Republics]. This is what the new interstate formation is called. The documents on setting it up were signed at a ceremony in St. George's hall in the Kremlin by Presidents Yeltsin and Lukashenka. And from now on, to stress the entire significance of this act, today, 2 April, will be a holiday, a day off. [passage omitted]

One of those who took an active part in drawing up the document that was signed today, Dmitriy Ryurikov, presidential aide for foreign policy and international relations, is in the studio today.

Dmitriy Borisovich, thank you for coming in. I want to ask you right away to explain. I think that the latest events are connected both with the adoption by the State Duma on 15 March of that scandalous decision revoking the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements and in with the documents that were signed 29 March by Yeltsin, [Kazakh President] Nazarbayev, [Kyrgyz President] Akayev, and Lukashenka.

And there was another signing ceremony today. You will agree that ordinary citizens are confused by all of that. [passage omitted] How do all of these treaties correspond to each other?

[Dmitriy Ryurikov] I would like to say that there is no such abbreviation as "SSR." The treaty that was signed today is called The Treaty on the Formation of the Community [Russian: dogovor ob obrazovanii soobshchestva] [passage omitted]

There is no treaty on the formation of a community, of an interstate formation. There is a system of integration

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of bodies, it may be said, a supranational system, and in some places, an interstate system. Practice will show. But they have powers thanks to which the decisions to be taken by these bodies will be binding for the governments of both states. That is the most important thing. What is important is, I hope, that they will have a very good budget. The governments will make proposals about this budget. I hope the parliaments will adopt them. These budgets will not just be for the upkeep of officials of the structure which will work for integration but for integration projects, that is, for joint affairs, more specifically. This is how it differs from the treaty between the four states where what is envisaged so far is the development of an integration programme without budget involvement.

[Kiselev] There is still the CIS, too.

[Ryurikov] There is still the CIS. There are still common principles that are adhered to both by states that signed the four-state treaty and by the states that signed the two-state treaty. The CIS commitments also remain binding for all the participants — both of the four-state treaty and the two-state treaty.

[Kiselev] And the bodies that were set up under the CIS framework remain and continue to operate?

[Ryurikov] They continue to function. And the next sitting of the council of the heads of states will take place on 17 May. [passage omitted] That is the CIS is more than the treaty of the four and the treaty of the two. But I want to say that in the CIS there is an integrated association of the Central Asian states. [passage omitted: it is rarely mentioned] It does not contradict the principles of the CIS. Both the states of Central Asia and of Russia and Belarus have decided to set up their own association. That is splendid. That is, there are different speeds and different levels of association. That is normal. That is normal.

[Kiselev] Dmitriy Borisovich, I would like to ask you this — to what extent could and did the Duma decision revoking the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements affect the acceleration of the integration processes between Russia and Belarus? [passage omitted]

[Ryurikov] [passage omitted] That process is much deeper and I ...

[Kiselev, interrupting] And, as far as I understand it, has nothing to do with what happened on 15 March?

[Ryurikov] You know that would have happened now because it was planned ...

[Kiselev, interrupting] The date was planned, too?

[Ryurikov] ... a long time before 15 March.

[Kiselev] Was the date planned?

[Ryurikov] The date was planned.

[Kiselev] And what about 29 March?

[Ryurikov] I will say this to you — remember the official visit by President Lukashenka to Russia. The decision, the communique said that proposals on integration should be presented within a month. Well, that happened approximately on the 29 March.

[Kiselev] [passage omitted: treaty signed by four presidents on 29 March was also prepared a long time in advance. It was not a hasty reaction to the Duma decision on revoking the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements. Nazarbayev, in a program on 29 March, spoke about the origins of the idea of a treaty between the four states; brief clip of voice interview with Nazarbayev on 29 March who says he proposed model of Euro-Asia union at Moscow State university two years ago, recaps previous discussions of idea of deepening integration between states which were ready for it]

What is your opinion — is there no preelection context to the documents that were signed last Friday and today by President Yeltsin?

[Ryurikov] You know, I can say honestly that we worked and did not think about the elections, we worked and did not think about the elections. We thought about how we would get things done by the time set by the presidents and how to preserve the sovereignty, the independence of the states and to ensure that the documents reflected quite clearly the will for integration and truly some kind of state unity. That's the first thing. [passage omitted: Kiselev says the president would gain points for it in the pre-election campaign, Ryurikov reiterates that the president thought about that a long time beforehand, perhaps even before the elections were a reality, but there is nothing bad if the president does gain some points; Ryurikov dismisses media supposition about postponement of presidential elections]

[Kiselev] Are there any purely legal points anywhere in the documents — I mean both those that were signed today and those signed on Friday by the four presidents — let's say, changes in the constitution, the creation of some suprastate bodies that could objectively lead to such changes? Is there any such thing?

[Ryurikov] Not a single clause. I think that all these documents will be published soon. They don't have anything that could give any food for thought along those lines. That is ruled out.

[Kiselev] That's clear. Dmitriy Borisovich, should these documents be ratified by Russian parliament?

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[Ryurikov] [passage omitted] Of course the parliament should look at them, ratify them. These treaties — both of the two states and the four states — have been presented to Russian parliament and I think that they will be received positively. [passage omitted]

[Kiselev] [passage omitted: contribution to joint budget will begin from 1997] What answer can you give to critics?

[Ryurikov] [passage omitted: there will be pluses and minuses] I think that in any event we will embark upon a system in which we will work jointly, together. The Russians won't feel any serious encroachments and I think the Belarusians will win by receiving a mighty Russian market. That is to say, everything will depend upon the skill of our governments and the understanding of our parliaments.

[Kiselev] So, we in Russia will call [Prime Minister] Viktor Chernomyrdin to account first of all?

[Ryurikov] Both the governments and the parliaments.

[Kiselev] That's clear. [passage omitted]

Russia: Grachev's Visit to Georgia Detailed

MM0304142296 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Aleksandr Pelts: "Ministers Happy With Results of Meeting"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi — Russian Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev's official visit to Georgia continued 2 April. These days, which the two countries' military delegations have spent in intensive work, have been truly historic for the process of the organizational development of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Georgia. Such was the assessment made of the accords by Georgian Defense Minister Lieutenant General Vardiko Nadibaidze during a press conference. For his part Army General Pavel Grachev noted that this was the first time that staffers of the two defense ministries had met in such numbers.

As KRASNAYA ZVEZDA has already reported, the agenda for the meeting included around 20 issues. It can already be said with confidence today that, thanks to intensive work by experts from the two delegations, there was total mutual understanding between the two states' military on almost all agenda items. Nine documents were signed as a result. I will name the most important ones. Above all there are the protocols of the working meeting between military delegations in the sphere of the joint planning and implementation of measures for combat operational training, the protocol on questions of preparing a new mandate for the collective peacekeeping forces in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone, the protocol on the procedure for supporting Russian Federation military pensioners residing on Georgia's territory and also members of their families, the protocol on cooperation in the sphere of personnel training and military education, the protocol on cooperation between the Georgian and Russian Air Forces, and the protocol on forms of cooperation in the sphere of air defense.

In addition documents were signed on cooperation between the two states in the organizational development of Georgia's Navy. Russian Federation Defense Minister Army General Pavel Grachev stressed that the most important point was the resolution of the task of protecting CIS airspace as part of a joint air defense system, and also the two sides' intention to create a regional air defense system in the Transcaucasus. He noted that this problem should been seen in the following terms. Each Commonwealth country has the right to its own air defenses, but at the same time the events of recent years have shown that we also need to have a joint air defense system within the CIS. Another component of the Commonwealth states' air defenses is the regional air defense system which it was recently decided to set up in the Transcaucasus.

The meeting paid great attention to problems of Georgian-Abkhaz relations. Army General Pavel Grachev stressed that the two delegations extended the mandate of the collective peacekeeping forces in the region, since its term had expired. The extended mandate will now be ratified at intergovernmental level.

Is there going to be anything new in the actions of the peacekeeping forces in the conflict zone? Answering this question, Army General Pavel Grachev noted that under the accords the peacekeepers will provide more intensive assistance in restoration work in the conflict zone. Above all it is a question of restoring the railroad. It was emphasized that Russia has already repeatedly expressed its approaches toward resolving the conflict. The main thing here is that Georgia should remain a single state, but relations between Russia and Georgia cannot be linked with the solution of the Georgian-Abkhaz problem.

During the visit the Russian Federation defense minister paid great attention to the problems of the Russian servicemen serving in the Group of Russian Forces in the Transcaucasus. For instance, the specific question of pensions for 40 former Russian servicemen who have not received their pensions from the Russian Federation Defense Ministry for almost two years because of confusion was resolved. Pavel Grachev thanked Lieutenant General Vardiko Nadibaidze for the attention and assistance he has shown toward these people. Colonel Gen-

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eral Fedor Reut, commander of the Group of Russian Forces in the Transcaucasus, has also done and is doing much in this matter.

Another step forward in collaboration and cooperation between the two states' military is the decision on training Georgian servicemen in military higher educational establishments in Russia. Army General Pavel Grachev stressed that Georgian servicemen can be trained at all military higher educational establishments in the Russian Federation, that good conditions have been created for this, and that the cost is quite acceptable. And, incidentally, there is a very great desire on the part of Georgian servicemen to study in the Russian Federation.

Collaboration in the sphere of the organizational development of Georgia's Navy also elicited a certain amount of interest from the sides. Army General Pavel Grachev noted that Georgia has the right to claim a proportion of the Black Sea Fleet and may receive several ships from it. However, the Russian Federation defense minister believes, this problem should be examined in the future, since it cannot be reduced to the simple transfer of ships. That is not enough, a certain infrastructure has to be prepared and control and logistical support systems have to be created.

Russia: Change in Peacekeeping Role May Lead to War With Abkhazia

MM0304142196 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Boris Vinogradov: "Russian Peacekeepers' Policing Role in Abkhazia May Lead to War"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian peacekeepers' mandate in the area of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, which expires 19 April, has been extended for 3 months — that is, until 19 July. This became known after the meeting between [Russian Federation Defense Minister] Pavel Grachev and [Georgian President] Eduard Shevardnadze in Tbilisi.

News agencies report that the meeting took place behind closed doors but in a "businesslike atmosphere." Why was the mandate extended for three and not six months as is the rule in the United Nations, and what decision was reached by those discussing a change in the peacekeeping troops' status — on which Georgia has long been insisting?

Back at the January CIS summit in Moscow Eduard Shevardnadze proposed giving our peacekeepers — who have occupied positions on the Inguri River for two years now — a "wider role." This would mean that the airborne troops of the 345th Russian regiment would have to start acting in the manner of the NATO operation in Bosnia, that is, use force and at the same time extend their influence to the whole of Abkhazia.

Experts have described this as a dangerous undertaking and an attempt to draw Russia into the war with the Abkhaz. The CIS heads of state decided not to support Shevardnadze and asked him "to wait."

The same question was raised at the meeting between the Georgian president and Boris Yeltsin 20 March. The result was similar. Shevardnadze has indicated more than once and says now that he sees no point in Russia's peacekeepers remaining if they are to continue to perform the "modest role of a shield separating the sides." In his opinion the peacekeeping forces' "inaction" is only keeping the situation in limbo and is not permitting political problems to be resolved.

On the other hand, [the Abkhaz capital] Sukhumi is stating that it will never agree to a change in the peacekeeping forces' mandate and will not sign an agreement on extending the operation if such a change is made. In this connection it recalls the incident when, on the orders of the peacekeeping forces' commander, General Kondratyev, an attempt was made to take a column of Georgian refugees across the Inguri to Abkhazia's Galskiy Rayon. It was only by a miracle that an armed clash between Russian airborne troops and Abkhaz militiamen was avoided then.

While in Georgia Pavel Grachev signed around 10 documents on cooperation, including some on the leasing of plots of land for Russian military bases in Vozian, Akhalkalaki, and Batumi. But the Georgian side warned that the fate of these agreements is directly dependent on how successfully Tbilisi's proposals on the "extended powers" of the Russian peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia are implemented. Pavel Grachev noted that an appropriate UN Security Council decision is required in order to alter the Russian troops' role.

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Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Officially Registers as Presidential Candidate

LD0304174296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1724 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Itar-Tass) — Russia's Central Election Commission registered Russian President Boris Yeltsin as an official candidate to run for presidency in the upcoming presidential elections slated for June 16, 1996.

"This is a very responsible moment for me because these are the third elections to be held in a democratic way like in any democratic country," the president said at a ceremony of registration on Wednesday.

After studying all registration documents — the final protocol of a meeting of the initiative group which had nominated Yeltsin, his application confirming his consent to run for reelection, an income statement for the last two years and lists of more than 1,300,000 signatures — the commission unanimously voted to register Yeltsin as a presidential candidate for a second term.

Commission chairman Nikolay Ryabov presented Yeltsin with a registration certificate making him the second officially registered candidate for presidency. Earlier, the commission had registered Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov as a presidential candidate.

"The future of Russia will depend on how people will vote," Yeltsin said.

"They may vote to continue to govern the state or they may vote to be deprived of such a right. I hope for their wisdom. I hope they love their country and will cast their ballots for the benefit of Russia so that everybody will win, Russia will win," he said.

He thanked all 15 initiative groups which had collected signatures in his support.

Meeting journalists after registration, Yeltsin said that this was "an unusual day" for him. "In the old times, the Central Election Commission's certificates were brought to the candidates' offices and they were always No. 1. The commission chairman accompanied by two people came to a candidate's office and presented him with a certificate."

"Now certificates have no number. However, mine says 'candidate for President of the Russian Federation for a second term'. No other candidate has such an inscription. But as you can see, I have arrived here for a meeting of the Central Election Commission without any ambitions in order to hear its decision and receive my certificate," Yeltsin said.

Asked whether he feared loosing the elections, the president said "of course I am worried, but I will fight for this post. This will not be an easy fight because I have a strong opponent. But am not afraid and I will fight in earnest."

Yeltsin said he would make his income statement available to the press so that people could know everything about their president.

According to the income statement for 1994, the president's total earnings were 552,331,580 roubles. Royalties for his book published in Britain made up a lion's share of that amount, 537,000,040 roubles. His net salary was 15,291,580 roubles.

In 1995, Yeltsin received 26,784,596 roubles and paid 4,309,216 roubles in taxes.

Asked about wage arrears, the president said he had kept his first promise he had given as a candidate — all debts of the federal budget had been paid.

"I want to report to you for March, for what I promised in Yekaterinburg in mid-February that we would pay all debts to the budget sector in March. All regions have received 100 per cent of what they are entitled to. The military, coal miners and all other categories of the population have been paid. Only private companies are left, but the state bears no responsibility for them. So I have kept my promise," he said.

Yeltsin said he had agreed with his economic adviser Aleksandr Livshits to report about the payment of wages in April each morning.

Russia: Filatov Cited on Yeltsin Supporters' Congress, Campaign Plans

MM0304184996 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 4 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Lyubov Volodina: "He Who Comes Closer to the People Will Be the Winner"]

[FBIS Translated Text] This week is significant in President Yeltsin's election campaign. Boris Nikolayevich is to register as candidate in the presidential election 3 April. The congress of the All-Russian Movement for Public Support for the First President of Russia [ODOPP], which Boris Yeltsin is expected to address, and where he is expected to announce his political platform, will be held 6 April. Sergey Filatov, chairman of the ODOPP Coordination Council, announced yesterday that the congress will also be addressed by Boris

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Yeltsin's personal representatives, as well as by participants in the movement from various regions throughout the country.

All the indications are that the group for the support of the president in the election has determined the main sphere of its work during the election campaign. This means direct contacts ("we have to explain a very great deal to the people") and directing efforts toward the Russian provinces. As far as the former is concerned, then here, according to Sergey Filatov, lies the root of mutual relations between society and the authorities: The alienation of society today is in many regards the result of the authorities' loss of feedback, and this must be put right. Obviously the president has fewer opportunities for direct meetings with his voters than his rivals have, but such meetings will definitely take place. A big burden will be shouldered by his personal representatives. According to preliminary information, they will include famous politicians from the capital (Vladimir Shumeyko, Ivan Rybkin, Yuriy Petrov), and people who are known and popular in their own regions. The task is to ensure that the policy of the Russian Federation president is properly understood by the voters in the provinces, where the central press is thin on the ground at present. One of the spheres of work of the coordination council of the movement in support of Boris Yeltsin is in fact making sure that information reaches the Russian regions. From what Sergey Filatov said, materials on the upcoming election are being completed and sent out even now. The publication of the Russia Is Our Home movement's newspaper DOM I OTECHESTVO [Home and Fatherland] and of the VYBOR-96 [Election-96] newspaper, which is close to V. Shumeyko's movement, has started, and the publication of the ODOPP newspaper NASH VYBOR [Our Choice], aimed at the activists of Boris Yeltsin's election campaign, will start this coming Saturday [6 April].

Russia: Yeltsin Fulfils First Election Promise on Wage Crisis

LD0304173596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1515 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Interfax) — Yeltsin said that he had delivered on his first promise as a presidential candidate — to deal with the wage payments crisis.

"I am still following up on the payment of wages and pensions. My economic aide Aleksandr Livshitz and I agreed that this will be the first issue I take up at 8:30 a.m. every morning. This will continue throughout April," Yeltsin said in response to an Interfax question in the Central Electoral Commission following his registration as a presidential candidate.

"I said in Yekaterinburg in mid-February that we will pay both back wages and current wages to state employees in March. I can report that all the regions had all the funds to pay wages and pensions, as did the military and coal mines," he said.

Back wages have not been paid in some private companies, but the state is not responsible for them.

In proposing his candidacy for re-election, he filled out his income declaration and ordered that this document be made available to mass media, Yeltsin said in answer to another question from Interfax. "Filling out that declaration was a lesson in being a citizen of the new Russia," he said. Yeltsin said that he had paid taxes on the fee paid to him two years ago for his book published abroad.

Russia: Zyuganov Remarks on Altay Campaign Trip

MM0304155196 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 1

[Report and commentary by Valentina Nikiforova: "'The Situation Is Showing a Clear Tendency To Deteriorate'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] All last week State Duma deputies were working in their [electoral] districts. Returning from a tour of Altay Kray, Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Communist faction and candidate for the Russian Federation presidency, held a news conference, the theme of which was designated simply: "On the socioeconomic situation in the Russian regions." We present the main questions asked at this conference, and G. Zyuganov's answers to them.

The Restoration of People's Power Could Start With Altay

[Zyuganov] At all the meetings — there were 12 — students and leaders of major enterprises, private farmers and academics, all said the same thing: If the current economic course continues, all the basic sectors will be paralyzed, and the rest will wither on the vine. Judge for yourself: The kray has the largest area of plowed land [in Russia] — 7 million hectares. There are 738 farms, but last year they bought only 42 tractors. Between 70 and 80 percent of the centralized heating system lines are extremely poor state of repair — unless urgent measures are taken they will not withstand their workload next winter. But this situation is not exceptional: my colleagues who have returned from

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their districts describe similar situations. What is being done in Altay?

A broad coalition has been set up under the name "For People's Power"; 27 organizations have joined it — Communists, Agrarians, Cossacks, women's, youth, and veterans' organizations. This bloc was formed in support of heads of administration and candidates for the kray's legislative assembly. The candidates were assessed by secret ballot at a conference. People said: "We are tired of mayhem. We want to elect representative organs on a multiparty basis, issue them with instructions, and hold them to account."

On the Vice President and the Shadow Cabinet

[Question] During your tour you said that [Kemerovo Oblast Duma Chairman] Aman Tuleyev could hold the post of vice president. It is strange: You once rejected the institution of the presidency, but now you have started talking about the post of vice president and the candidacy of Tuleyev.

[Zyuganov] We believe that this post is necessary for the stability of the executive and for additional control over the presidential service. Aman Tuleyev is one candidate for this crucial post.

[Question] Reports have filtered out that on your tour of Altay you made public your shadow cabinet. Certain names have been mentioned: Among them are Goryacheva, Baburin, Ilyukhin, Tuleyev.... How far does this correspond to reality? And if such a cabinet exists, how will duties be distributed?

[Zyuganov] The decision on a cabinet will be taken by the enlarged membership of the Public-State Council, whose members will be representatives of parties and movements and the most authoritative policy drafters. As for specific figures, I named many who are capable of coping with the various problems. I ran through the list of those who could handle legal questions: Goryacheva, Baburin, Ilyukhin, the attorney Ivanov, and a number of others. Who will be able to handle agrarian policy? I named: Starodubtsev, Lapshin, Kondratenko from Kuban. Who could run industrial policy competently? Yuriy Dmitriyevich Maslyukov is sitting over there; he has a huge group working with him that has ties to the leading institutes formulating economic strategy and specific stabilization and development programs. There are many talented and gifted people in the country — but for the moment they are sidelined.

Truth About Chechnya From the Communists

[Question] Yavlinskiy has accused you of being in favor of continuing the war in Chechnya, of supporting Zavgayev, and of opposing the withdrawal of troops. The situation there right now is alarming.

[Zyuganov] Indeed, the situation there has not gotten any clearer. Two or three people made the decision [to go in], but the whole country has to sort out the mess. Our way of settling the conflict envisages above all a clear coordination of efforts here in Moscow.

Also: The three branches of power — the president, the government, and the legislators — will set up a general commission endowed with **wide-ranging** powers. Second: We insist on the immediate convocation of a Congress of Caucasian Peoples. Third: It is essential to adopt measures that prevent further weapons and gunmen being poured into this blazing region. They speak of settlement, but weapons are being taken from gunmen that were made in 1995 at Russian plants! Fourth: Funds should be allocated only to facilities that are under construction, because money is not reaching the builders. The Ministry of Rural Construction alone, which is headed by V. Vidmanov and is building several major facilities there, is owed 200 billion rubles for the past three months.

And all these specific measures must be underpinned with a decree stipulating that if the extremist forces lay down their arms within 20 or 30 days, they will be given a full amnesty. And all explanatory and organizational work should be moved to specific rayons, villages, and auls. Once we reached agreement in four rayons it became possible to withdraw the troops. [Zyuganov ends]

[Nikiforova] Forty-eight hours after this news conference B. Yeltsin announced his own option for solving the "Chechen problem." I listened and was amazed: Two-thirds, or even more, of what the president listed was proposed by the Communists a year to 18 months ago. All the same, how does Zyuganov assess this statement?

[Zyuganov] A completely belated, populist, election statement. Had he listened to the opposition sooner and used his power, there would not be a tragedy on this scale. Even now our program is more specific, more reliable, and surer of fulfillment. [Zyuganov ends]

Will the Communist Party Overcome "Khovanshchina"?

[Nikiforova] Are you satisfied with the formation of your bloc? Do you expect any other major forces to join? There are a huge number of articles in the mass media at the present time about disagreements in the Communist Party. Is this ordinary electioneering, or is there no smoke without fire?

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[Zyuganov] All the signatories to the agreement (so far there are 51) are actively participating in the work. A session of the [campaign] staff has been held to examine the schedule of events for the next month and appoint representatives to all the commissions in which policy documents are to be elaborated. Yesterday youth organizations announced that they would be joining the bloc, and at a meeting with leaders of trade union movements I received the advice to establish contacts with all forces whose hearts bleed for the Fatherland. As for disagreements — that is the pet theme of our opponents. They are trying to sow the seed of discord among us in order to destroy our movement. Our tragedy of recent times can be summed up in a single word — "schism." Yesterday I was at the 220th anniversary of the Bolshoy Theater to see an interesting production of [Mussorgsky's opera] "Khovanshina" [reference to 1682 Moscow uprising of streltsy Palace Guard in power struggle engineered by Sophia daughter of Tsar Aleksey and subsequently regent during early joint reign of Ivan V and Peter the Great]. The story is instructive. The seed of schism is sown among peoples by the introduction of "unlimited sovereignty" — and they were left with nothing but "sovereignty." It was sown among enterprises, parties, and movements. Now they are trying to test our organization. I understand them: If they cannot splinter our electorate, our likelihood of success at the elections is great. As for the leaders of movements and the Communist Party of the Russian Federation [CPRF] leadership, many people criticized me keenly and did not agree with the election platform at the State Duma elections, but they have now signed the agreement and are working energetically toward its fulfillment. As for a split in the party leadership: As presidential candidate I have the right to appoint the leader of the campaign staff. If I had any disagreements with Valentin Aleksandrovich Kuptsov, I would not have appointed him. The party and faction leadership is working closely with our allies. I am confident that we will continue to operate closely and in harmony. [Zyuganov ends]

[Nikiforova] And it is simply essential to finish this report from Zyuganov's news conference with material presented to journalists by I. Melnik, chairman of the Committee for Education and Science. He read out letters to the State Duma from the General Prosecutor's Office. One of these says: "Prosecutors are increasingly encountering incidents of schoolchildren fainting from hunger and of the theft of bread and other food. Malnutrition among children has led to an increase in ailments of the digestive organs. In the past five years their frequency among first-year pupils has risen twentyfold... In 700,000 families with young children one of the parents is unemployed, and in 60,000 such families both parents are unemployed. Seventy thousand unemployed families have three or more children. The Russian Federation Government has been informed of breaches of the law, but the position remains extremely alarming. Moreover, it is showing a clear tendency to deteriorate."

Russia: Rejected Candidate Threatens To Sue Electoral Commission

MM0304145996 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Viktor Vodolazhskiy under the "Elections-96" rubric: "Back to Court?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] So passions in the TsIK [Central Electoral Commission] are becoming increasingly heated.

"We will ruin you, Nikolay Timofeyevich, and your whole TsIK for your biased decision; you are patently paving the way for Boris Yeltsin" — that agitated remark was addressed to Nikolay Ryabov by the well-known entrepreneur Vladimir Bryntsalov, honorary president of the "Fereyn" pharmaceuticals firm and now ex-contender for the presidential elections, as he left the hall of sessions. "My lawsuit for injury to honor and dignity will cost you a trillion rubles!"

The irritation of the would-be candidate was preceded by a rather stern ruling by Andrey Beloborodov, member of the TsIK: "V. Bryntsalov is refused registration as a candidate; the relevant documents are to be sent to the General Prosecutor's Office for investigation of violations and falsification of the collection of signatures...."

Members of the TsIK explained that of the 1.4 million signatures collected by Bryntsalov's action group, 127,000 were rejected because of gross inaccuracies, and a further 350,000 on suspicion of falsification.

...The TsIK instruction on the procedure for granting air time to candidates for the post of Russian Federation president was discussed with equal animation.... Incidentally, the instruction only applies to the state media. According to the document adopted, free air time is to be made available only to candidates registered by the TsIK. Nobody is entitled to free advertising in newspapers and journals.

The TsIK determined that candidates' publicity broadcasts will take place 14 May through 14 June. There will be both "solo" performances and television debates, "hot lines," and "roundtables".... Each candidate is entitled to 10 minutes of the morning program and the same in the evening.

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Russia: Presidential Contenders' Election Chances Viewed

MM0304130696 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Article by Aleksandr Batygin: "Not Everyone Will Be Able To Reach the Pass Mark. 74 Days to the Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On Sunday the Russian president took a powerful step in the starting phase of his election campaign by publishing a peace plan for settling the Chechen crisis. The implementation of the main provisions of Boris Yeltsin's election platform, apart from resolving the Chechen problem, includes an energetic social policy, as expressed in the commencement of the payment of wage debts and aid to pensioners, the poorly off, and students; and a real deepening of integration between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

These strong initiatives by the president and his team in the election race cannot be compared with the indicators of other contenders for the post of Russian head of state. Both sociological polls and life itself demonstrate Boris Yeltsin's steadily growing rating. If the questions concerning Chechnya and the payments are resolved by summer, his chances of success will increase immeasurably.

Naturally, in the present heightened political struggle Boris Yeltsin is using the resources of power, drawing on major state decisions and measures (take, for instance, the recent edict on the implementation of citizens' constitutional rights to land). However, a high state post in itself does not necessarily guarantee an automatic extension of the term in office, nor does it confer real levers of power, the right to which still has to be demonstrated. Not everyone will be able to reach the pass mark in June.

In fighting opponents in an unstabl ituation it is easy to sink into futile polemics which could turn outrageous. "Frontal" anticommunist propaganda is hardly appropriate today — the views of elderly people, who make up the nucleus of the Communist Party and have seen everything in their time, cannot be reshaped. The president does not permit himself any offensive, let alone humiliating, words about the veterans who march to rallies with red banners. But the leaders of the so-called democratic parties and movements not infrequently go beyond the bounds of political polemics in their attacks on the Communists.

In the electoral associations at present a regrouping of forces is taking place, possible scenarios are being calculated, and the contenders for the Kremlin post are being named. The leaders use every opportunity to make their presence felt. Thus, G. Yavlinskiy went to St. Petersburg last weekend to take part in a rally against the war in Chechnya. Under the slogan of a week of mass antiwar actions, the "Yabloko" leader intends to visit — apart from St. Petersburg — Chelyabinsk, Rostov-na-Donu, Nizhniy Novgorod, and other major industrial centers. There need be no doubt about how the "walkabouts" will go: At the press conference in St. Petersburg the discussion was first and foremost about 16 June. G. Yavlinskiy stated categorically: "Boris Yeltsin will not be able to beat Gennadiy Zyuganov in the second round. It is impossible."

Grigoriy Alekseyevich, who undoubtedly considers his own victory possible, has been concerned with only one thing in recent years: how to protect his political innocence. The methods are tried and tested: Do nothing — just oppose the authorities and declare your own noncomplicity in the events taking place in the country. A few purely theoretical programs are no reason to claim victory.

The chance of success is still more hypothetical for the new nominee of the Democratic Party of Russia [DPR] — the former commander of the 14th Army, who was approved as the party's presidential candidate at the Ninth DPR Congress on Saturday. In the view of DPR leader S. Glazyev, only A. Lebed is capable of ensuring the national rebirth of the strong state.

The retired general, who began his political career with the slogan "I care about a strong state," accepted the party's baton graciously and shared with the delegates his plans on how, in his view, Russia should be revitalized. It seems that Russia does not need an elected parliament.

"There is this desire to ape the West, to do everything like the big boys," the general explained. "We need a small, highly qualified Duma appointed by the president."

It was said emphatically, leaving no doubt as to which president was meant. But does this idea of appointing, rather than electing, not remind you of anything? I remember a certain Latin American general who also liked imposing order, who liked everyone to salute.

The DPR, which five years ago was the first to support B. Yeltsin in the elections, is today torn apart by ideological and organizational contradictions. It is no accident that even before the congress decision was made public, representatives of the Moscow, Sverdlovsk, and Kamchatka regional party organizations submitted an alternative proposal — vote for Boris Yeltsin in the interests of stability. Because, they explained, it is risky to

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let a nonprofessional into power. Nonetheless, the DPR took the risk.

The presidential candidate from the people's patriotic bloc, to give him his due, is behaving much more reputably, not like an actor in the provincial theater. Tours of the country follow one after another. But what is called populism is present to a considerable degree in G. Zyuganov's election speeches. For instance, in Ryazan on Saturday the Communist Party of the Russian Federation said: "With skillful (!) leadership the Russian economy could be revived quite quickly." Zyuganov sets the term of recovery at a minimum of five years. But in real life the opposition itself has said repeatedly that the damage is such that it cannot be made good in 20 years. And now it is just five years. Does this mean that what matters most is to make a promise?

Today all the presidential candidates, without exception, are talking about ways of turning Russia into a mighty, prosperous state. It's like in soccer — the reserve bench looks pretty big, but the key players can be counted on the fingers of one hand. And the ones who have to save the game are those who have grown wise through experience, are tried and tested in decisive battles, and are capable of taking the game upon themselves.

Russia: Gunman Reportedly Fires Shots in Direction of Yeltsin's House

LD0404110496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1056 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 4 (Interfax) — Shots were fired in the direction of President Boris Yeltsin's residence last night, Interfax has learned.

An unidentified gunman, parked outside 10 Osenniya Street in a GAZ-66 truck, shot three times from an SVD sniper rifle toward buildings 3 and 5 across the street at 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, law enforcement agencies told Interfax. The president's family lives in one of the said buildings.

No one was harmed, police said. The assailant immediately dropped his weapon and left the scene in a Model 8 or 9 Zhiguli car.

Further details of the incident are unknown.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, and a number of other high-placed politicians live in the same building in the Krylatskoye neighborhood in northwestern Moscow.

Russia: 'Informed Source' Says Yeltsin's House Not Sniper's Target

LD0404103296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1027 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 4 (Itar-Tass) — An informed source in Russian law enforcement bodies today denied media reports that several shots were fired at President Boris Yeltsin's Moscow home on Wednesday [3 April].

The source branded the reports as "groundless," adding that in fact several shots were fired in the direction of a house next to the apartment block where Yeltsin and his family live.

The case is beeing investigated, the source told Itar-Tass.

Russia: Decree on Signing Russian-Armenian Agreement Published

MM0404085296 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 8

[Russian Federation Government 21 March 1996 decree no. 317 "On Signing of Protocol Between Russian Federation Government and Republic of Armenia Government on Deliveries of the Most Important Types of Output in 1996"; from "Documents" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow — The Russian Federation Government decrees that:

The draft protocol between the Russian Federation Government and the Republic of Armenia Government on deliveries of the most important types of output in 1996 (attached) [footnote] [not published] submitted by the Russian Federation Ministry for Cooperation with the CIS States and agreed with the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry and other federal organs of executive power and given a preliminary study with the Armenian side is to be approved.

V.M. Serov, Russian Federation minister for Cooperation with the CIS States, is to be instructed, on reaching an agreement, to sign this protocol on behalf of the Russian Federation Government, allowing changes and additions which are not of a fundamental nature to be introduced to the attached draft.

[signed] V. Chernomyrdin, chairman of the Russian Federation Government

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Russia: Government Resolution on Cutting Oil Export Tariffs Signed

LD0304170996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1218 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (Interfax) — A government resolution on reducing oil export tariffs has already been signed, First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Kadannikov told Interfax on Wednesday.

His statement reaffirms reports emerging at the end of last month that Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin has endorsed such a resolution. Deputy Economics Minister Sergey Vasiliyev said the tariffs will be halved from 20 ECUs to 10 ECUs per tonne from April 1.

The measure is also in line with Moscow-IMF accords serving as a basis for IMF's decision of March 27 to extend a loan of more than $10 billion to Russia.

However, the State Customs Committee had received no government instructions on tariff cuts by April 2.

Kadannikov said the resolution provides for export tax cuts from April 1 and that an appropriate directive will be sent to the Committee soon.

Russia: Deputy Ministerial Appointments Reported

MM0304135296 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Transfers, Appointments, Resignations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] By Russian Federation Government directive Andrey Grigoryevich Chernenko has been appointed Russian Federation first deputy minister of nationalities affairs and federal relations. Vladimir Nikolayevich Chaplygin has been confirmed as first deputy minister of agriculture and food and general director of the Federal Food Corporation. Anatoliy Yakovlevich Sidenko has been relieved of his duties as Russian Federation deputy minister of railways in connection with his reassignment to the board of the CIS states' Council for Rail Transport.

Military Issues

Russia: Grachev Views Cooperation With Poland, Chechen Situation

LD0304150896 Moscow Russian Public Television First Channel Network in Russian 1100 GMT 3 Apr 96

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[FBIS Translated Text] After today's talks between of Russian and Polish military delegations, [Russian Defense Minister] Pavel Grachev spoke to journalists for the first time about his attitude to the president's decree on a settlement of the situation in Chechnya.

It is not the military's business to discuss an order, he said. It is their business to carry out the order. As to the actual measures proposed by the president, we fully support the proposals for a peaceful settlement of the conflict, the defense minister stressed.

[Correspondent Polozhentsev] Poland's decision to resume military cooperation with Russia is far from fortuitous. Its desire to join NATO has not diminished. But the North Atlantic bloc cannot help reckoning with Russia, which is categorically opposed to its expansion, so it is in no hurry to accept new members into its ranks. Poland, on the other hand, almost all of whose arms are of Soviet make, acutely needs spares and new equipment.

Russia is not against expanding military-technical cooperation with Poland, Pavel Grachev said today at a meeting with Polish military leaders, but if it goes ahead and joins NATO we will be forced to review our plan of cooperation.

However, he later assured journalists:

[begin Grachev recording] No state is likely to join in the near future as far as I know. NATO leaders and we — Russia and NATO jointly — will perhaps find in the future more acceptable forms of cooperation for the sake of ensuring European security. [end recording]

[Polozhentsev] Moreover, he said, Poland wants to join NATO for purely political motives, but for all that there will not be a change in Moscow's firm position regarding NATO's expansion.

Today the two defense ministers agreed on the creation of a group of experts for cooperation in scientific and technical fields and also decided to hold in the second half of 1996 a number of joint military exercises. [Polish Defense Minister] Stanislaw Dobrzanski said Warsaw is interested in the best relations with Moscow.

The session itself was held behind closed doors, but after it was over Pavel Grachev answered journalists' questions on the situation in Chechnya after the president's decree.

[begin Grachev recording] The troops remain in all the positions they occupied on 1 April. The troops have been ordered to deploy in their individual basing areas to that part of the forces in Chechnya can subsequently be withdrawn to where they should be permanently based in our country. As to how the other side behaves, that is another matter. Wherever there is shooting we will return fire for fire. In future, in accordance with the

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decree, we will mount only special selective operations, and only against those bandit formations which do not obey the president's decree. But we will not mount any general troop operations unless there follows a fresh decree and the situation changes. [end recording]

[Polozhentsev] Vladimir Polozhentsev and Aleksandr Gorchukov, ORT, Moscow.

Russia: Politics of Top Brass Considered

MK0404054496 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian
No. 13, 31 Mar-7 Apr 96 (signed to press 1 Apr 1996) p 11

[Report by Aleksandr Zhilin, chief of Security Problems Department, under the "Document" rubric: "Generals' Sympathies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Officers from the Defense Ministry's staff have passed to MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI a document that contains analysis of the top military commanders' political preferences. That this analysis is circulating widely we were convinced of several days later, when we received similar material from our source at the Russian Defense Ministry's Main Educational Work Directorate. At the same time it was reported that it was all drawn up confidentially at the request of Gennadiy Zyuganov's team. Military experts were presented with just one condition: to answer impartially the question of who is who in the top echelons of military power. On 26 March the document was ready. Since this is a nearly 40-page document marked "confidential," MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI publishes excerpts from it.

The Alignment of Forces at the Defense Ministry and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation on the Eve of the Presidential Election

Currently, the decisive factor affecting the alignment of forces at the Defense Ministry and the General Staff of the Russian Federation is the presidential election. The main criterion or the key "watershed" in determining political sympathies or antipathies of the top military elite is increasingly coming down to the question of whom it supports. And, although it would seem logical that the top brass should unequivocally support Boris Yeltsin as their commander in chief by virtue of their official position, in fact this is far from being the case.

The current group of top generals has found itself in a situation where its future career will directly depend on who will become Russia's new president. From this stems an inevitable, expedient and mercenary question: Whom to back? If Yeltsin wins again, it is his supporters who will gain the upper hand on the military Olympus, headed by First Deputy Defense Minister Andrey Kokoshin (intellectually, the strongest figure at the Defense Ministry of the Russian Federation). If Zyuganov, Yavlinskiy, Zhirinovskiy, or Lebed are elected, Defense Ministry and General Staff officers will inevitably be in for a purge.... All these considerations force the top brass to play their political totalizator and so predetermine very complex and often covert maneuvers and intrigues, as well as discreet contacts between the generals, the presidential candidates and the staffs of their parties.

When divided into groups on political or any other (departmental, family, friendship) grounds, the command of the Russian Armed Forces is reminiscent of a multilayered pie of sorts, whose upper layer has the greatest influence — when compared to the other layers — on both the country's leadership and the Armed Forces. It is important to point out that despite the differing political sympathies of these groups, their varying visions of the further ways of the Armed Forces' organizational development, the strengthening of national security, and the methods of realizing Russian strategic interests in both the near and far abroad, most of them nonetheless agree on the main thing: The state needs Armed Forces such that they could reliably guarantee its defense under any twist of events. But that notwithstanding, the "watershed" between them does not disappear at this point. Part of the generals insist that further economic reform and the organizational development of the Armed Forces should proceed under Yeltsin's command, while the other, much more numerous part thinks that the current president has exhausted his potential, brought the country and its Armed Forces to a shambles, and that, for this reason, he must make way for a president and a government that will be able to restore Russia's economic and defense greatness.

Proceeding from this premise, the aforesaid groups are looking (overtly or covertly) for supporters at the Defense Ministry and the General Staff, in the barracks and the fleets, who's stances agree with their teams' presidential candidates. At the same time, there is a "counter movement:" leaders of parties and movements are trying increasingly hard to contact the top brass, its most authoritative representatives.

Brief Characteristics of the Main Groups at the Defense Ministry and the General Staff

Currently, groups with specific, pronounced stances are already discernible at the Defense Ministry and the General Staff, the military command of the armed services, combat branches, military districts, fleets, and among the top generals working at other state agencies.

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For the purpose of this survey they can be divided into several groups:

The first group — the generals unequivocally backing President Boris Yeltsin (the Yeltsinites).

This group is headed by First Deputy Defense Minister Andrey Kokoshin and includes Generals K. Kobets, V. Churanov, A. Solomatin, V. Toporov, chiefs of a number of the main and central directorates of the Defense Ministry and the General Staff, commanders of military districts, fleets, and groups of forces — Generals V. Chechevatov (Far Eastern Military District); V. Tretyakov (Transbaykal Military District); Admiral O. Yerofeyev (Northern Fleet); Vice Admiral V. Kravchenko (Black Sea Fleet); and F. Reut (Group of Forces in the Transcaucasus).

....This group has the most influential connections on the presidential and the government staffs and serves as an active drive belt for their policy line in the Armed Forces. [ellipses as published] It is this group that managed to make sure that the "party of power" (NDR) got more than 70 percent of the vote by streamlining the final protocols in the requisite way.

Currently, there is obviously a strong desire on the part of the Yeltsinites to establish solid contacts with the State Duma's defense committees and to turn them into "lobbyists" of their interests. The group is explicitly interested in Yeltsin's victory in the elections because this would help it retain its privileged position in the military. With A. Kokoshin's authorization this group has already embarked on an energetic covert campaign in Yeltsin's support, trying to win over their subordinate commanders by promising them guaranteed retention of their posts, promotions, and so forth in the event that the president is reelected.

The second group includes the generals who have adopted a wait-and-see stance and who do not want as yet to make public their specific political likes and dislikes — to make positive or negative assessments of the authorities' actions in the defense area — and for this reason have to maneuver their way between opposing groups (neutrals).

The most typical representatives of this group in the top military elite include Army General Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of the General Staff; his deputies, Generals V. Zhurbenko and A. Bogdanov, a number of chiefs of main and central directorates of the Defense Ministry and the General Staff, such as Generals V. Barynkin (Main Operations Directorate); V. Kuznetsov (Main Military Budget and Finances Directorate); A. Sitnov (armaments); commanders in chief of a number of armed services, such as I. Sergeyev of the Strategic Missile Forces; commanders of military district troops and fleets, such as General V. Seleznev of the Leningrad Military District, and others.

This group's style of behavior and official line of conduct is characterized by circumspection, caution, the desire to steer clear of political bickering and to avoid points of friction, while stopping short of admitting who is actually responsible for the military's decline. The desire to keep their official positions and status under any political regime, to adapt themselves to circumstances is a typical feature of the neutral's behavior. They demonstrate only outward support for the Yeltsinites, but it cannot be ruled out that in the event of a change of power they might try to achieve the key positions in the military elite.

The uncertainty of the neutrals' political stance has long been a cause of particular concern on the part of the presidential team, which is trying to obtain firm guarantees that they would be on Yeltsin's side at the decisive moment. It is important to point out that the neutrals are trying to play their own game, stopping short of coming into conflict with the Yeltsinites or demonstrating too insistently their loyalty to the ruling regime.

The third group includes the top brass opposed personally to Defense Minister Pavel Grachev. For a long time the most prominent representatives of this group in the Defense Ministry's leadership were Deputy Defense Ministers Generals B. Gromov, V. Mironov, G. Kondratyev, E. Vorobyev, A. Lebed, and also still acting Generals V. Semenov (commander in chief of the Ground Forces); V. Prudnikov (commander in chief of the Air Defense Forces); I. Kasatonov (first deputy commander in chief of the Navy); I. Rodionov (chief of the General Staff Academy). They have expressed their disagreement with the methods and forms of conducting military reform, military integration with CIS countries, and the style of personnel policy in the military. They have also criticized the rough-and-ready method of resolving the Chechen conflict by force. They are not afraid to make public their critical views on the urgent problems of military organizational development at meetings of the top commanding personnel and the armed services' military councils. The "quiet" opposition members enjoy a considerable authority in the military and can play a decisive part in swaying the Armed Forces one way or another in political terms. However, they are unlikely to give Boris Yeltsin their backing as long as P. Grachev remains defense minister. For this reason the CPRF [Communist Party] tactics of keeping P. Grachev in office until 16 June, and the absence of any criticism of the defense criticism on the part of the opposition, are fairly justified.

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....Among the commanders of the troops of military districts and fleets, the "quiet" opposition includes Generals A. Sergeyev (Volga Military District); L. Kuznetsov (Moscow Military District); V. Kopylov (Siberian Military District); Admiral V. Yegorov (Baltic See Fleet); and others. General V. Samsonov, chief of the Main Staff for the Coordination of Military-Technical Cooperation Between CIS countries, and Lieutenant General L. Ivanov, secretary of the same main staff, also belong to this group. The emergence of the group of "quiet opposition" in the top military elite can be regarded as a form of polite protest on the part of some professional commanders against the defense minister's ill-conceived, risky, or rash decisions with regard to national defense. The views of the "quiet opposition" members can be described as enlightened patriotism, close to those of "etatists."

The fourth group is made up of retired generals who have openly voiced their disagreement with the authorities on matters of domestic and foreign policy and military reform, who, for this reason, have been subjected to pressure by political and military leaders "on high" and have in many cases suffered for their stance (the "defiant" generals). They include V. Achalov, V. Varennikov, E. Baltin, and all the generals of the late Soviet era, such as V. Lobov, S. Sokolov, V. Kulikov, Admiral A. Sorokin, and others. With the exception of V. Achalov, none of them has real leverage in influencing the military.

The fifth group is Pavel Grachev's team.

It includes the generals who are closest to the defense minister, such as V. Lapshov, Ivanov, P. Deynekin (commander in chief of the Air Force), F. Gromov (commander in chief of the Navy), V. Yevnevich (commander of the group of forces in the Dniester Region), V. Vorobyev (former chief of the Military Budget and Finances Directorate), and some others. They are distinguished by their undisguised conformism and the fear of being held responsible for the consequences of the so-called military reform, the wasting of state funds and commercial operations. This group is the most unpredictable and is ready to strike up an alliance with any forces in the country that can guarantee its security.

....The actual sentiments in the Armed Forces can be gauged by using "closed" surveys conducted by military pollsters (see table).

....Recently, thanks to A. Kokoshin's efforts, the Defense Ministry has managed to increase considerably its influence on the State Duma. All drafts of "military laws and decisions" have been regularly submitted to the Defense Ministry and the General Staff for expert appraisal, and the Defense Committee has systematically invited corresponding specialists from the Defense Ministry and the General Staff for expert consultations. In early March of this year, at the initiative of the State Duma's Defense Committee, a joint discussion of the problems of the ratification of START II and the drafting of a military reform concept was held at the General Staff.

....*Further on in the chapter "Main Factors Shaping the Military's Viewpoint on the Presidential Election" cites secret figures characterizing the military's state of combat readiness, discipline, morale, and so forth. They are picked specifically for the purpose of making it more convenient to discredit the president during political campaigning events to be held in the military. MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI does not publish this chapter exclusively because it contains the secret figures.*

The document ends with fairly peculiar conclusions.

....It is essential to take account of the fact that as elections draw nearer scandalous showdowns are set to occur in the political top echelons, which will inflame the situation in the country to the limit. The army, bound by the unity of command, will in all likelihood stay away from the fray for some time. But as the scale of the inevitable scandals increases and the possibility emerges that the situation may slip out of control due to mass disturbances, the opposition's attempts to seize power in the regions or, possibly, in Moscow, a part of the military will take the side of the opposition. This is particularly likely in what is described as regions dangerous for the current regime, where the CPRF has a strong support base.

Results of Surveys in 1995-1996. What Politicians Do You Trust Most?

March 1995 %	August 1995 %	January 1996 %
Zhirinovskiy 15.5	Zhirinovskiy 15.8	Zyuganov 21.5
Chernomyrdin 14.6	Yavlinskiy 14.5	Zhirinovskiy 18.4

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March 1995 %	August 1995 %	January 1996 %
Zyuganov 14.2	Zyuganov 14.1	Chernomyrdin 8.3
Lapshin 10.2	Lapshin 10.5	Rutskoy 5.6
Yeltsin 9.8	Chernomyrdin 9.9	Yavlinskiy 4.3
Shumeyko 8.7	Yeltsin 6.2	Yeltsin 4.2
Rutskoy 7.4	Rutskoy 6.2	Rybkin 3.1
Yavlinskiy 6.6	Rybkin 5.8	Lapshin 1.5
Rybkin 6.5	Gaydar 5.2	Shumeyko 0.8
Gaydar 6.3	Shumeyko 3.1	Gaydar 0.4

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma Votes To Support Union With Belarus

LD0304165096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1641 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (ITAR-TASS) — The Russian State Duma on Wednesday voted to support a newly-formed Russian-Belarusian union and drafted a statement to this effect which is to be finalised in two days and issued on Friday.

"We call on presidents, parliaments and governments of all CIS countries to support the process of the Russian-Belarusian rapprochement and join it in any acceptable form. We are confident that comprehensive reintegration is in the interests of all peoples of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," the draft said. The document is open to modification by parliament factions and lawmakers.

On April 2, Presidents Boris Yeltsin of Russia and Alyaksandr Lukashenka of Belarusia signed a treaty to form the Community of Sovereign Republics.

Russia: Duma Deputies 'Split' on Russian-Belarusian Union

LD0304141696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1218 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (INTERFAX) — Russian Duma deputies were split in their appraisals of a new union between Russia and Belarus as some questioned its ability to fit into the existing CIS, while others were hopeful that it would be joined by other ex-Soviet republics in the years to come.

Russian maverick general Aleksandr Lebed said he did not understand what a new Russian-Belarusian union was "although I voted and even fought for the USSR." "How does it comply with the Constitutions of Russia and Belarus and how does this SSR fit into the CIS?" he asked, referring to the Community of sovereign republics. "It would be a good idea to figure this out first," he added, and then decide whether the new structure is a "positive or negative" development.

Another Duma deputy, Sergey Shakhray, told Interfax that his Russian Regions group would raise the question of ratification of the Russian-Belarusian union agreement and "the treaty of the four" on further integration among Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan at its meeting this Friday.

Shakhray believes one should not expect other CIS states to join the agreement this year. At the same time, he said "this is most likely to happen next year."

Communist Duma deputy Petr Romanov pointed out that "if our peoples and the peoples of other CIS countries benefit from the Russian-Belarusian community, the signing of the Russian-Belarusian agreement can be only welcomed and approved."

He did not rule out the possibility that some ex-Soviet republics were ready to join the union, "but they subconsciously look at the instability in Russia pending presidential elections."

Russia: Duma Speaker Criticized by Deputies

LD0304152096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1453 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Igor Zhukov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW April 3 (ITAR-TASS) — "Some party factions in the State Duma concentrated on political tasks and the holding of the presidential campaign. Regrettably, Duma Speaker Gennadiy Seleznev has not avoided this concentration on party activities. This was manifested strikingly by the adoption of the so-called Belovezhskaya resolutions

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which caused scandalous repercussions within Russia and abroad," says a statement of deputies read out at a news conference on Wednesday [3 April]. The statement was issued by "Russian regions" group of deputies (it includes independent deputies elected in one-seat constituencies who did not join factions in the State Duma. The group is co-chaired by Ramazan Abdulatipov, Vladimir Lysenko, Vladimir Medvedev).

The deputies are not satisfied with the way in which the State Duma functions. Medvedev and Abdulatipov believe permanent contacts with voters indicate that people are "very disappointed with the initial results of the work of the newly-elected State Duma".

In this connection the group of deputies "Russian regions" (independent deputies) decided to suggest that Duma Speaker Seleznev ensure that plenary meetings are conducted in turn by all his deputies representing various factions and groups of deputies. It is suggested that stands of factions and groups of deputies be coordinated to ensure the early passage of draft laws of priority importance through the Duma and the Federation Council. It is suggested that the deadlines for their presentation be steadily observed and that these draft laws be given priority at plenary meetings in the Duma.

Russia: Duma Budget Committee Rejects 1996 Budget Amendments

MK0304135196 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Svetlana Lolayeva: "The Budget Committee Recommends That the Duma Reject Quarterly Breakdown of the 1996 Budget. In Finance Ministry's Opinion, Deputies Give Carte Blanche to the Government"]

[FBIS Translated Text] After a long discussion, the Budget Committee, despite much persuasion of Finance Ministry officials, passed a negative judgment on a draft law "On Amending the Federal Law 'On the 1996 Federal Budget.'" The draft law, submitted to the state Duma in late February, includes — in addition to quarterly breakdown of the budget, the distribution of expenditures among agencies, federal targeted programs, and the state investment program — a number of new items in the 1996 budget. They envision, among other things, the allotment of 3.7 trillion rubles for the Chechnya restoration program, at the expense of the investment program, and additional financial aid to depressed regions at the expense of denying transfers to those Federation components whose revenues exceed expenditures.

The Budget Committee proposed that the government work on the draft law for one more month so as to provide for the payment of 1995 wage arrears and to envision wage indexation by a factor of 1.2 after 1 April in the quarterly breakdown and the cost structure by agencies. According to Deputy Finance Minister Stanislav Korolev, it is technically unfeasible to submit a finalized draft earlier than in two months, since results of actual implementation of the budget in the first quarter need to be taken into consideration. In the opinion of Irina Flyagina, head of the Finance Ministry's Budget Department, by rejecting the law the deputies are giving carte blanche to the Government permitting it to effect the funding of ministries and to implement the budget in the first and second quarters at its own discretion, since the Duma will be able to consider the adjusted quarterly breakdown not earlier than 1 August.

The Finance Ministry's arguments did produce the desired effect on some members of the Budget Committee, who suggested that the law be adopted in first reading so as to be further elaborated to perfection "by working constructively with the Government." This dissent in the ranks of colleagues, however, was curbed by Budget Subcommittee Chairman Oksana Dmitriyeva, who said that the Finance Ministry's statement about inability to finalize the draft within one month signifies that the Government is unable to work constructively even with itself. As a result, 17 out of the 23 Budget Committee members voted for the rejection of the draft law.

Russia: Duma Passes Bill Giving Concessions to Investors

LD0304142796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1350 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (INTERFAX) — Russia's lower house of parliament, the State Duma, on Wednesday [3 April] passed at the first reading a draft law on giving concessions to Russian and foreign investors.

The law, proposed by the government, would rule that concession agreements be based on the results of open tenders and/or auctions, whose winners are to be named by the central government and/or a regional administration.

Communist deputies insisted on serious changes in the draft submitted by the government, among other things demanding that a list of enterprises for which concessions can be given be subject to approval by the Duma and that extra conditions be made for giving concessions.

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Russia: Duma Fails To Pass Bill on Human Rights Commissioner

LD0304152996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1218 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (INTERFAX) — Russia's State Duma failed on Wednesday to pass the third reading of a draft law that would create a human rights commissioner.

The bill, initiated by the communists and their supporters, was put to vote twice, but each time the lower house fell short of the required quorum of 300 votes and collected 257 and 259 votes respectively.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, said he was not happy about the procedure set by the draft law for the Duma to appoint the human rights commissioner.

"Don't try to talk us into voting for this sacred law. Deputies should want to do so voluntarily, like a woman does when she gives herself to a man for the first time," he said.

The legislation was also opposed by Vladimir Medvedev, a member of the Russian Regions group, who said that the human rights commissioner should be appointed by a two-thirds vote, not by a simple majority.

Duma Chairman Gennadiy Seleznev's attempt to reach a consensus with the deputies during the break produced no result and the draft law was returned for revision to Duma committees.

Under the present bill, the human rights commissioner is appointed for a period of five years and dismissed by the State Duma by a simple majority through a secret ballot.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Yeltsin Says Kiev 'Will Surely' Want 'Deeper' Integration

LD0404091296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0858 GMT 4 Apr 96

[By Vitali Ilgov and Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BELGOROD, April 4 (ITAR-TASS) — President Boris Yeltsin arrived in the regional centre Belgorod on Thursday [4 April] on a two-day factfinding trip.

The president told reporters who welcomed him at the airport that he had intended to visit the Belgorod Region for a long time but had not been able due to various circumstances. "I now act in two capacities: as President and as a presidential candidate.

"Therefore, it is impossible to divide my work now. I can resolve issues as President, and I can promise as a candidate," joked the Russian leader.

Yeltsin said that he brought, to the Belgorod Region, three decisions, important for the region and for the entire agro-industrial complex of the country, which will be made public possibly today.

Addressing representatives from the customs service, Yeltsin asked about the situation on the border with Ukraine. The head of state expressed optimism concerning future relations with Kiev.

"Ukraine is also a Slav country and will surely march on the road of deeper integration. We shall have relations with it some time in future at the same level as with Belarus," the president stressed.

Yeltsin started his Belgorod visit with laying down a wreath at the Eternal Flame. Flowers were also laid at the memorial where 108 troops who had died during the liberation of the city from the Nazis, had been buried. All in all, over 30,000 soldiers had died during the liberation of Belgorod. The president honoured with a minute of silence the memory of those who had fallen for the freedom of the Homeland.

Later, Yeltsin talked for a long time with Belgorod residents who gathered in the square, asked questions about the sitution in the social sphere, about wages and pensions.

Young Belgorod residents asked the head of state about a possibility of opening a medical faculty at Belgorod University. After a brief conversation with regional top executives, Yeltsin said that an appropriate decision would be taken in the near future.

Then, the president viewed the "Kursk Battle" diorama and talked with World War II veterans. "Veterans is the category of people who deserve, to the utmost degree, not only our respect but also true care for their living standards," the Russian leader stressed.

He said that a rise in pensions and implementation of measures to provide each veteran family with normal housing, medical and other services should be another move in this direction.

Yeltsin expressed satisfaction that Belgorod does much to immortalise the feat of the soliders of the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945. In the president's opinion, local authorities should use better possibilities of the diorama museum and other cultural centres in the city for patriotic upbringing of young people.

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Russia: Yeltsin Visits Belgorod, Explains Refusal To Visit Ukraine

LD0404115496 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Here is a report on the Russian president's visit to Belgorod region. At Belgorod airport Boris Yeltsin talked with inhabitants of the city. Speaking about the program for today's trip, the president said:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] In Belgorod region my program is quite intensive. I brought with me three decisions which will have a major effect for Belgorod region and for Russia also, and for the agroindustrial complex as a whole. But I shall tell you about them later at the final conference in Prokhorovka. [end recording]

What he is talking about, first of all, is three draft laws the most important of which is an edict on financial support for agrarian reforms. As well as this, the president prepared an edict on the industrial development and provision of mains gas supplies to the region and the development of the mining and metallurgical complex.

The inhabitants of Belgorod asked about the problem of indexing their savings bank deposits. Boris Yeltsin promised that work will soon begin on resolving the problem:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] A decree is being prepared. I shall sign it, perhaps in a week or so. We shall introduce indexing very gradually. That is, you will have the certainty that you will receive this money, but in stages. The older a person is, the sooner he will be paid. The younger he is, then it will be a bit later. [end recording]

At the Salient of Fire exhibition Boris Yeltsin laid a wreath at the memorial in memory of those who fell in the Great Fatherland War. He also talked with veterans at the Salient of Fire museum-diorama. The war veterans asked about the fate of the Black Sea Fleet. The president noted that the reason for his refusal to visit Ukraine is the uncertainty over the fate of the two bays which are strategically important for the Russian fleet:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] I simply cannot sign a general treaty before signing a treaty on the Black Sea Fleet. We shall not give in over this. We shall approach them again and again, with diplomatic and all kinds of measures. We have measures. We have measures which can force them to agree, or to reach some compromise which would suit us. [end recording]

Russia: Yeltsin Urges Media To Treat Military With Respect

LD0404114596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1032 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Belgorod, 4 April (ITAR-TASS) — In Russia there is freedom of speech. Journalists can publish and show on television what they like. "However, they are patriots of our homeland and must respect those who defend our fatherland. They must treat the military with respect, as it has long been the case in Russia." This idea was expressed by President Boris Yeltsin in Belgorod today in reply to the veterans' complaints that there are many attacks on the Army in the media.

"The military has always been honored. This is how it must remain. This is the message we should be conveying in the press — not the opposite," the head of state said. At the same time he said that, according to his assessments, "there are considerably fewer attacks on the Army at present." In reply to questions from Belgorod residents on the situation in Chechnya, Yeltsin said: "We will now be holding talks. All the main military actions have ceased. Where there are still small gangs, we will be catching them because they are violating the law."

"We will find a solution to the Chechen problem," the president is convinced.

Yeltsin, who arrived in Belgorod today, will be familiarizing himself with the situation in the region over two days.

Russia: Tatarstan, Kazakhstan Sign Agreement in Kazan

LD0304221596 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1500 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Gennadiy Yezhov and Nikolay Sorokin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kazan, 3 April (ITAR-TASS) — An agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technical, and cultural cooperation between Kazakhstan and Tatarstan was signed in Kazan today.

"With this document, we are joining in the general process of integration which was started on the initiative of Russian President Boris Yeltsin," Tatar President Mintimer Shaymiyev, who was sworn in today, said at the signing ceremony for the agreement. He praised highly the visit by the Kazakh state delegation to Tatarstan.

"The agreement has been signed within the framework of the treaty between Kazakhstan and Russia," Kazakh

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President Nursultan Nazarbayev said in his turn. He have come to Kazan to attend the festive inauguration of President Mintimer Shaymiyev, who has been elected for a second term. Feelings of friendship, he stressed, are close to the Kazakh and Tatar peoples. Nursultan Nazarbayev said that more than 320,000 Tatars live in Kazakhstan and they are distinguished for industriousness and desire for unity with other peoples.

Russia: Chernomyrdin Hails Tatar Statehood, Shaymiyev Reelection

LD0304220496 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1530 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin took part in a plenary session of the Tatarstan State Council convened on the occasion of Mintimer Shaymiyev's inauguration as president for a second term. Viktoria Safonova reports:

[Safonova] Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin read out a message from Boris Yeltsin congratulating Shaymiyev on his convincing victory in the elections — I will remind you that more than 97 percent of voters taking part in the elections voted for Shaymiyev. Viktor Chernomyrdin described the result as unprecedented in the present circumstances, and said it serves as an indicator of public confidence:

[Begin Chernomyrdin recording] The election result is also recognition of what has recently been achieved in the Republic, and of its very noticeable role in strengthening our Federation. Industrial production has started to rise in Tatarstan since the second half of 1995. The increase is especially evident in such important areas for the Republic as the chemical and petrochemical industry and the fuel industry. There have also been successes in agriculture.

Federal authority is well aware of what is going on in the Republic. A good deal has already been done and a lot is being done now. The most recent example of this is the decree signed two days ago by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin on state support for Tatarstan's defense industry enterprises, which are implementing major projects to assimilate civilian production. Substantial aid will be given.

Tatarstan's present position and its accumulated potential for growth is the pride and the achievement of all the people of Russia. It provides further clear justification of the policies of social democratization, economic reform, and development of genuine equal federal relations implemented by the president of the Russian Federation since 1991.

The treaty on the delimimitation of powers between the state authority and Tatarstan's bodies of state authority has played a special role in the development of our Federation. The further on we are from the day when this crucial document was signed, the more we realize its importance. It showed how it is possible, without violating the Russian Federation's constitutional basis, using a system of treaties and agreements, to guarantee the unity and integrity of Russia while also granting its components maximum powers to resolve issues of vital importance.

I know that Mintimer Sharipovich regards internationalism as one of his main qualities. I understand and agree with him when he says that division from Russia has not helped anyone and will not help anyone. We are for Tatarstan's statehood and independence, but within Russia.

On that optimistic note I would like to end my message of congratulations, esteemed Mintimer Sharipovich, on the day of your inauguration as president of Tatarstan for a second term. I wish you good health and great achievements, dear Mintimer! [Chernomyrdin says a few words in Tatar; applause] [end recording]

Economic Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Decree Drafted for Return of Foreign Exchange

LD0304222696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1559 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (INTERFAX) — About $50 billion in foreign exchange was removed from Russia during 1991-1995, Chairman of the Russian Federal Service on Currency and Export Control Oleg Pavlov told Interfax, citing data from the Central Bank and the State Customs Committee.

At present, Russia does not have "an efficient mechanism to return capital which has been removed abroad," Pavlov said. "The only exception seems to be the movement of foreign exchange proceeds from export and import operations, over which control is well-tuned on the whole," he said.

"There is an immense variety of methods to remove hard currency from the country: in the form of credits or investments through offshore firms or just in a suitcase," Pavlov said.

Russia can recover capital only by two methods: "either by forcing its return via Interpol or by creating conditions for its return to Russia," Pavlov said. The first method is "good only for money which is being laundered abroad," he added.

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However, there is a large quantity of money abroad which has been earned and removed absolutely legally, Pavlov said. "The owners of this money may be glad to return it to Russia but cannot do this because under existing legislation, the money returning to Russia will be earmarked for the treasury," he said.

The Federal Service on Currency and Export Control has prepared a draft presidential decree which may set down conditions for "the voluntary return of foreign exchange to Russia," Pavlov said. The draft decree will give businessmen an opportunity to bring money back to Russia without penalties "during some period of time, for instance six months," he said.

Such foreign exchange will be placed in the accounts of a bank authorized by the Russian government to check the money's origins through Interpol, Pavlov said. "If it is discovered that the money has no criminal history, it will be available to its owner," he said.

However, the draft has serious opponents, in particular within the power structures, who speculate that the proposal contradicts existing legislation, Pavlov said. However, from the point of view of economic reason, it will be better to open the way to "clean foreign exchange" and turn a blind eye to the fact that it was abroad for some time rather than never recover the money at all, he said.

Russia: Late-May Money, Foreign Exchange Markets Reviewed

MM0404102796 Moscow FINANSOVYYE IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 1

[Untitled "Currency Review" by Igor Doronin, Moscow Interbank Currency Exchange adviser on market conditions — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] Last week was the end of the first quarter of 1996, and conditions on the money market were accordingly determined by the traditional shortage of rubles and the growth in rates of interest on the interbank loans market, overnight loan rates having increased to 90-100 percent by the end of the week.

This shortage was exacerbated by the policy of selling state securities, caused by the Finance Ministry's need for monetary resources. All this created a pretty tense situation on the money market, particularly the short-term state bonds market, which was relieved somewhat only by the end of the week.

On the currency market, by contrast, the situation was unusually stable. This is evidence of the very considerable segmentation of Russia's money market whereby the situation in one segment only weakly affects the state of affairs in another. On the one hand, the banks were in no hurry to sell currency, clearly regarding their own currency holdings as an inviolable reserve; on the other hand, they were in no hurry to buy it either, because of a shortage of ruble resources. The monotonous increase in the exchange rate of the dollar by two points each day during the week's exchange trading indicated that the Central Bank intends to pursue a policy of providing a soft landing for the ruble. The smooth and virtually imperceptible growth in the exchange rate of the dollar was matched by the volume of transactions. Their net volume was unusually stable during the week, deviating insignificantly from the average level of $5 million.

The German mark waxed and waned throughout the week, increasing by a total of 6.5 points. The same fluctuations were experienced by the French franc, whose exchange rate showed a 10-point increase over the week. The pound sterling fell steadily against the ruble, which was due to the decline in its exchange rate on the world's currency markets.

Russia: Finance Minister Details Russia's Foreign Debt

LD0304220896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1459 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikita Yermakov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris, 3 April (ITAR-TASS) — Russia's aggregate foreign debt is $134 billion, the overwhelming part of it debts of the former Soviet Union, Finance Minister Yevgeniy Yasin said today. Negotiations are now being concluded with the London and Paris clubs on a long-term plan to restructure the Russian external debt over a 20-year period, he told a news conference at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

There are also debts to private companies, mostly left from Vneshekonombank's virtual bankruptcy in 1992, the minister continued. We are getting ready to settle them, because it's important if we wish to attract foreign investment.

As regards the prospects of Russia joining the OECD, he confirmed the intention to become a member of the organization, which now brings together 26 of the leading industrial states. He said he will discuss this matter with OECD leaders while he is in Paris.

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Russia: State Borrowing Policy Seen Fueling Inflation

MM0404093796 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Article by State Duma Deputy Boris Fedorov: "Our State Debt: Any Rhyme or Reason?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] For many years we have dreamed of putting a stop to the funding of the state budget deficit out of so-called Central Bank loans. There is no doubt that these loans are the equivalent of printing money and lead to surges in inflation.

Finally in 1995 the dream came true, and Central Bank loans to the budget came to an end. But inflation remained very high — around 130 percent a year. Why was that?

There are many explanations. The key point is the sharp increase in the foreign reserves of the Central Bank, which has been actively buying foreign exchange and thereby dumping more and more rubles in the market.

For instance, I am not confident that the introduction of the exchange rate band, which has opened up a huge casino speculating on the short-term state bond market, has had no inflationary consequences — despite what its architects may think.

If we look at certain indicators, Russia's economic position is marvelous. According to the indicator of budget deficit as a proportion of GDP it is time we were joining the EU. If we take state debt as a proportion of GDP, then compared with Sweden we simply have no debt. Unemployment is at least 75 percent lower than in Finland. And so on and so forth.

There are many reasons why there is this patent lack of correspondence between formal statistics and the actual situation. For instance, when will we find out how much state money does not pass through the budget? How much tax is actually not being collected? How many tens or hundreds of billions of rubles have been lost to the budget as a result of corruption or out-and-out theft?

The main problem is that the instruments of economic policy are aimed at an economy the greater part of which is not under our control. You can imagine what would happen if a military leader gave the Army an order, but it was only heeded and carried out by a single battalion. How can there be any question of policy being effective?

That is why I ask the question — is it not dangerous to fund the budget deficit through three-to-six-month securities when budget deficits are normally funded solely by medium-dated and long-dated bonds? Is it not dangerous to be paying 100-percent interest a year on our debt in dollar terms, and tax-free at that? Yes it is.

Our short-term state bond market is worth, say, $15 billion. Real yields in dollar terms average, say, 50 percent — in other words, the state needs at least $600 million a month to pay its debts. Who has worked out the economic impact and consequences of this burden on the economy and the taxpayers? What could be more dangerous and, ultimately, more inflationary?

The majority of these government borrowings are needed by Russian borrowers — in other words, the state removes from the credit market the bulk of all liquid resources, and there is not very much left for issuing ruble loans. Anyone can observe the impact of the squeezing out of private borrowers — as a result, loans for production purposes are impossible.

Who can compete with a state? Personally, as an investor, I like exceptionally high real interest rates, but they are absurd from the economic standpoint. It is impossible to boost production in this situation.

The other danger posed by the excessively short life of state securities is the "pyramid effect." Any major removal of funds from a market could result in the entire mountain of debt (mainly built up to refinance previously issued bonds) coming crashing down.

It is obvious that many people will start changing rubles into dollars before the presidential election in order to avoid any currency or political risk. Suppose by June $5 billion leaves the short-term state bond market. What would happen to the budget? All the more so as in May we will need to pay $1.5 billion on domestic foreign-currency debt and get rid of wage arrears and other problems.

It is absolutely right to allow foreigners to buy short-term state bonds. This will lower the yield on short-term state bonds and the overall level of interest rates. But at the same time it is clear that foreigners are more fearful of political factors than are ordinary Russians. Won't they be bailing out of Russia by mid-June? Won't we face the same financial catastrophe as Mexico did? Who will save us?

There is no doubt that we need a far more conservative strategy on the question of state debt. Politicians everywhere are always focused on their short-term interests, and the pressure on the Finance Ministry and the Central Bank is constantly being stepped up. But the country's interests are more important.

The solution is to really cut the deficit rather than to dangerously build up highly costly short-term state debt. To really cut interest rates along with inflationary

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processes, to which end we need to make the Central Bank discount rate a real instrument of policy and create an effective commercial bank refinancing system.

Reserve requirements could be halved without any fears, since it is not the banks that are creating our inflation. The exchange rate band is a speculative indulgence — it could quite easily be replaced by a responsible economic policy. In short, we should strive to achieve genuine financial stabilization.

What could be worse than further undermining confidence in the authorities, resulting in further suffering for the population from inflation and other negative consequences? We should all put our thinking caps on.

Russia: Payment of Wage Arrears Leaves Treasury Cash-Strapped

MM0304134996 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 2 Apr 96 p 1

[Report by Irina Savvateyeva: "President Pays Off Wage Arrears in Full, but Is Making Strict Demands on Regional Leaders for Regions' Debts"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Boris Yeltsin, as he promised, has paid off the backpay owed by the federal budget. Henceforth the entire burden of political responsibility for the timely payment of salaries will be shouldered by regional leaders.

During March considerable sums were allocated from the federal budget to fund salaries. The state treasury's current salary payments come to 7.9 trillion rubles [R]. The federal budget's debts under this heading are R8.1 trillion. R4.7 trillion is a federal budget loan to Federation components and local budgets to cover wage arrears. To a considerable extent the R1.8 trillion in this March's transfer payment to Federation components along with the R1.7 trillion owed under this heading have gone on paying salaries.

As a result, the federal budget no longer owes any money on salaries. Incidentally, salaries at organizations receiving money from the federal budget have not yet been paid everywhere — the money is moving through banking channels. Aleksandr Smirnov, chief of the Russian Federation Finance Ministry Main Administration for the Federal Treasury, is assuming that it will reach its specific end users within five or six days.

As for the state of affairs with salaries in organizations financed by Federation components and out of local budgets, they will now depend wholly and in full on the local authorities.

Virtually all administration heads signed protocols in Moscow under which they assume full responsibility for the timely payment of salaries in the budget sphere once all the payments due from the federal budget have been received.

Thus, by carrying out massive injections of cash, the center will be able to make regional leaders responsible for any holdups in the payment of budget-sector salaries. Judging by everything, some exemplary punishments of governors shown to be at fault can be expected in the near future.

But the "covering" of all budget salary requirements does not yet mean that this problem has been completely solved — it is not just workers at budget-sector enterprises who want to be paid. Thus, as a result of the intensified campaign against wage arrears things will be tough in April for those working at enterprises linked by payment obligations to budget-sector organizations. And primarily, for municipal services, power generation, and gas industry workers.

Since all possible resources in March were used to pay salaries, the federal and regional budgets did not have enough funds to finance other items of expenditure. Having had their salaries paid in full, those same budget-sector organizations received pennies or nothing at all by way of payment for municipal services. The local authorities too have used for salary payments virtually everything remitted to them by the Finance Ministry.

And the government is unlikely to be able to solve this problem in April — there is no money. According to Aleksandr Smirnov, the tax revenue shortfall in March was of the order of 20-25 percent. In April, the treasury leader believes, there will be no improvement in the situation. The state has done what it can to offset the debts for municipal services. But the sums involved have been small. In April scientific institutions and health and education enterprises will receive R250 billion for these purposes.

The situation is further compounded by the fact that in April the federal budget will have to pay R4 trillion to the Pension Fund, which cannot make ends meet at all.

According to Aleksandr Smirnov, the need to finance the Pension Fund and the difficult revenue situation will prevent the government from carrying out the 20-percent indexation of the minimum wage that is planned by the Duma as of 1 April.

Current salary payments, the treasury leader assured me, will be made by the budget on time in April as well. Weekly payment timetables have already been drawn up.

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Russia: Railways Ministry Owes Federal Budget Over R4 Trillion

LD0304151296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1220 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By Nadezhda Anisimova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (ITAR-TASS) — The Railways Ministry entered the year 1996 with arrears of 4,300 billion roubles [R] to the federal budget, First Deputy Minister of Railways Ivan Besedin said at a meeting of the government commission on improving the system of payments and settlements here on Wednesday [3 April].

He also noted that this sum has been more than halved as of today.

Besedin requested the commission to examine questions of state support for railways, aimed at doing away with losses and deficit of funds. For instance he asked the commission to free the ministry from paying the added-value tax in the first six months of 1996 to channel these funds of 3,200 billion roubles to finance expenses.

He also requested to work out the main areas of the tariff policy for the second half of the year, which will enable the ministry to do away with losses and deficit of funds.

However, commission members did not hear Besedin's call. For instance first vice-premier Vladimir Kadannikov who heads the commission, said that "the present work of the ministry gripped the entire national economy by the throat".

In Kadannikov's opinion, tariffs which are raised by the ministry, guided by its own understanding, lead to a situation when transport expenses in the leading industrial sectors "have been increased exorbitantly".

"Those who can give up railway haulage with its exorbitant tariffs, use this opportunity, switching to road haulage," the vice-premier emphasised.

The vice-premier bluntly demanded that the ministry pay debts to the budget, explaining his position by the government's obligation to pay wage arrears.

"Instead of getting money from payers, the government is forced to make domestic loans, which can bring a new round of inflation," the vice-premier stressed. He added that it is high time "to cut the knot into which the economy was tied up by the Railways Ministry and the industries of the fuel and energy complex, in order to settle the question of nonpayments.

Russia: Union Leader Says Government Not Paying Back Wages

LD0304191596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1515 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 3 (INTERFAX) — Mikhail Shmakov, chairman of the Russian Federation of Independent Unions (FNPR) said he was unsatisfied with the government's actions toward paying off back wages.

"Although government representatives say that the federal budget has settled its debts with educational, health, and cultural companies, there is still no solution to the problem," he told FNPR leaders April 3.

The wage debt is rising, according to official statistics, Shmakov said, it rose by over 500 billion rubles from February 20 to March 18 on all levels of government and now totals 4.7 trillion rubles, he said.

Social tensions continue to mount despite the partial payment of back wages in Kemerovo, Saratov, Yekaterinburg, Barnaul, the Khabarovsk area, and Vladivostok, Shmakov said, citing the leaders at the FNPR conference.

A regional warning strike is planned for April 10 in the Maritime territory, and doctors will protest collectively on April 11. Pedagogues "are also planning to get out on the streets in April," he said.

The unions will continue to "put pressure on the executive powers, demanding the 100 percent payment of wages to all the country's workers," he said.

Russia: Auditors Say GKI Failed To Ensure Privatization

LD0404130196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1215 GMT 4 Apr 96

[By Pavel Kuznetsov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 4 (ITAR-TASS) — The auditing chamber of the Russian Federation today said the State Property Managing Committee (GKI) and its agencies, the Russian Federal Property Fund and the Federal Directorate for Insolvency Cases, failed to accomplish their task of ensuring privatisation in Russia in full measure.

Veniamin Sokolov, who spoke for the auditors, said the inspection ordered by the State Duma's resolution of October 20, 1995 revealed that the GKI had only gone through the motions of managing federal property and controlling the effectiveness of its use. It failed to create an effective system of registration of state property

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and was guilty of breaching the procedure of making decisions on the sell-off of enterprises.

The Russian Federal Property Fund failed to keep due records of the state property it handled for the owner and to ensure due management of blocks of shares belonging to the state, Sokolov said.

The inspection also revealed that law had been violated in the course of auction sales of property. Sokolov said information about the breaches had been handed over to the Procurator General of Russia. He added that "materials relating to GKI deputy chairman Alfred Kokh and Federal Directorate leader Pyotr Mostovoi" had also been forwarded to the office of the Procurator General.

GKI chairman Aleksandr Kazakov told the press conference that the papers summing up the results of the inspection conducted by the Auditing Chamber of the Russian Federation were "a priceless document summarising all the errors made by GKI."

It made clear "where privatisation can and must be carried on and where we must not venture." "We will recognise and carry out all recommendations of the Auditing Chamber," Kazakov said.

Russia: Transport Operators Must Set Oil Exports Timetable

MM0304155096 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 8

[Decree No. 348 of the Russian Federation Government "On Volumes of Exports of Petroleum, Petroleum Products, and Electricity in 1996 in Accordance With Intergovernmental Agreements," dated 25 March 1996, Moscow]

[FBIS Translated Text] In order to ensure exports of petroleum, petroleum products, and electricity to meet the Russian Federation's commitments under intergovernmental agreements the Russian Federation Government decrees that:

1. Volumes of exports of petroleum, petroleum products, and electricity in 1996 in accordance with intergovernmental agreements, as per the appendix (Footnote) (not published), are to be approved.

2. The interdepartmental commission on the regulation of questions connected with the use of the system of main oil pipelines, petroleum product pipelines, and terminals in sea ports for the export of petroleum and petroleum products outside the customs area of the Russian Federation is to ensure that the oil deliveries indicated in the appendix to the present decree are incorporated in the quarterly schedules for the transportation of petroleum and petroleum products by the system of main oil pipelines, petroleum product pipelines, and terminals in sea ports.

[signed] Russian Federation Government Chairman V. Chernomyrdin

Russia: State Leasing Firm Urged To Boost Aeroengine Sector

MM0304143796 Moscow FINANSOVYYE IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Mar 96 p 2

[Report by Anatoliy Sautin: "Manufacturers of Aeroengines Count on State Support" — received via Internet]

[FBIS Translated Text] The crisis state of the Russian aviation industry was illustrated recently by the examples of two companies: the "Aviadvigatel" Joint-Stock Company and the "Permskiye Motory" Joint-Stock Company. Over the past three years production of PS-90A engines at the "Permskiye Motory" Joint-Stock Company has fallen by over 90 percent. Last year just five were assembled. Meanwhile, there is a great need for new engines.

Last year the Samara, Voronezh, Ulyanovsk, and Kazan Aviation Plants ordered 60 PS-90A engines but bought just six. In addition, new engines are needed by air carriers, the majority of which are now staying afloat only by repairing old equipment. For example, Il-76MF aircraft will need modernizing in the very near future. According to some estimates, the Russian pool of these aircraft now contains something like 700 machines. The aircraft have now been flying for 10-15 years. But whereas the airframes are prepared to go on flying, the engines no longer "pull," since they were developed as much as a quarter-century ago.

Transport aircraft make a big profit, particularly when they fly abroad. But a failure to comply with environmental standards means foreign airports will be closed to many Russian aircraft as early as next year.

The "Union of Aeroengine Manufacture" Association proposes a way out of the situation, urging the government to set up a state leasing company. "By paying for orders to aircraft manufacturers and leasing aircraft to carriers, the State would thereby support the manufacture and development of promising aviation equipment in Russia," Viktor Chuyko, the association's head, believes.

Moreover, sectoral science, which has been unwanted because the manufacturers have been idle, would also pick up. For example, at the Institute of Aeroengine Manufacture near Moscow, where basic research is conducted in the spheres of gas dynamics, combustion, and

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heat exchange, Europe's largest test bed for areoengines is standing idle without orders.

Not that the lack of orders, so it turns out, is the only problem for Russian engine manufacturers. "We are concerned in many ways about the aggressiveness of our Western competitors' advertising policy," Viktor Chuyko said. "Not having an interest in the development of the Russian aviation industry, foreign companies try to prove that our equipment is dangerous to use."

The PS-90A engine, for example, is frequently compared with engines from the Rolls Royce and Pratt and Whitney Companies. "The engine was developed recently, and it would be incorrect to contrast it with Western analogues which have already been 'improved' in the process of many years' operation," Ivan Bashkatov, technical director of the "Permskiye Motory" Joint-Stock Company, said.

It is normal practice when an engine that has just been created is improved and "cured of teething troubles" over several years, he believes. Moreover, even apparently tried and tested engines are not insured against accidents. Last year two aircraft fitted with Rolls Royce and Pratt and Whitney engines had to make a forced landing because of engine malfunctions.

According to Bashkatov, the PS-90A is constantly being improved and has already received several certificates. Last year the developers succeeded in doubling the engine's operating life, reduced the noise factor to the necessary standards, and, interestingly, made it 8-10 percent more economical than Rolls Royce engines.

It is worth pointing out that the Russian PS-90A costs $1.6 million, whereas Western engines cost $8-10 million. The developers claim that the Russian engine can be made still cheaper. For the main expenditure is on energy sources, which account for 24 percent of the price structure. Materials account for 44 percent of the cost, 2.4 percent goes on wages, and only 13 percent takes the form of profit.

Research and development itself does not require a lot of money either. The figure of $1.5-2 billion — which is what Western companies spend on creating a modern engine — can only make Russian scientists smile. According to their estimates, in Russia this work would cost exponentially less.

Russia: Pharmaceutical Industry in 'Critical' State

MM0404101996 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 30 Mar 96 p 5

[Unattributed untitled report under the "Business Chronicle" rubric — from the "Economic Union" section]

[FBIS Translated Text] At present the level of production of medicines in Russia is in a critical state which needs to be urgently rectified.

Yuriy Grigoryev, chief of the Russian Ministry of Health and Medical Industry Medical Industry Administration, noted in his report that the 21 chemical and pharmaceutical enterprises currently existing in Russia are working in an extremely inefficient manner. The enterprises produce a total of 5,896 medicines, which is fewer than a single pharmaceutical plant should turn out. As usual one of the chief causes is an absence of funding. Specialists have proposed as solutions to the current situation the abolition of value-added tax, the removal of the many "obstacles" presented by the licensing system for export deliveries, the abolition of concessions on payments for electric power, and also the introduction of preferential repayable credit for pharmaceutical enterprises.

Aside from this, the question of drawing up a state order for medicines was discussed at the collegium.

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Russian-Ukrainian Commission on Black Sea Fleet Meets

LD0404115096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1117 GMT 4 Apr 96

[By Sergey Ostanin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, April 4 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian-Ukrainian commission in charge of transfer of vessels and installations of the Black Sea fleet from Russia to Ukraine met in Sevastopol today to sum up results of the first stage of the fleet division and continue drafting an agreement on the Fleet which the Presidents of Russia and Ukraine are expected to sign during their forthcoming summit, sources in the Black sea fleet headquarters told Itar-Tass by telephone.

The commission was following in the steps of the Russian and Ukrainian defence ministers who met in the Carpathians on March 28 and 2 to sign a plan for the division of the fleet, a statement on the division of the mines and rockets and another statement on the utilisation of arms.

One moot point remains as regards where the two fleets should be based with Ukraine wanting its base to be located in the bay of Sevastopol, a stone's throw from the Russian fleet base, and Russia objecting to the proposal which contradicts the earlier agreement on separate bases for the two fleets.

The division began after Russia and Ukraine signed an agreement on January 11, 1992 ceding to Ukraine a brigade of armoured boats in Izmail, a brigade of coastguard vessels in Ochakovo and a helicopter squadron based in Saki.

By the middle of 1995, the entire north-western part of the Black Sea fleet from Izmail to Ochakov was transferred to Ukraine and 140 installations of the Black Sea fleet were transferred to Ukraine after December 1, 1995.

According to the ex-commander of the Black Sea fleet, Admiral Eduard Baltin, Ukraine has already received 74 percent of the Fleet's warships, 75 percent of its aircraft, more than two-thirds of airfields and 80 percent of the military bases with infrastructure.

Baltin said Russia was retaining only Sevastopol, Nikolayev and Feodosia. Baltin thinks that after the division of the former Soviet Black Sea fleet, "there will remain neither Russian nor Ukrainian fleet in the Black sea, there will be only tactical groups but no operational strategic grouping."

Ukraine: Russian, Ukrainian Warships To Stay in Sevastopol

LD0304205496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1759 GMT 3 Apr 96

["INTERFAX-UKRAINE" news item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SEVASTOPOL, April 3 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Both Russian and Ukrainian warships will be deployed in Sevastopol for now according to the provisional deployment plan, well-informed sources in Sevastopol told Interfax-Ukraine.

The plan, currently under development by the two fleets' commands, will be valid until a political decision is made, they said.

The two commands have started to create commissions that are to be responsible for the transfer of military installations outside Sevastopol, the sources said. The commissions are expected to transfer and receive some 50 warships and auxiliary vessels.

The two fleets will also create a joint medical center in Sevastopol. Ukrainian servicemen will be able to attend Russian medical establishments, and vice versa.

Ukraine: Defense Minister, Slovakian Counterpart on Partnership

LD0304185696 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1440 GMT 3 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — At a meeting between Ukrainian Defense Minister Valeriy Shmarov and Slovak Defense Minister Jan Sitek, the latter stressed that Ukraine was a natural partner for the Slovak Republic, UNIAN learned from the press service of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry.

During the meeting Valeriy Shmarov noted that in adhering to the principles of nonalignment and neutrality, Ukraine's approach to "regulating its relations with both the East and the West was quite smooth." Commenting on the possible expansion of NATO eastward, he said that Ukraine was not making a drama out of the process because every country had the right to resolve the problem of national security for itself. Our country, Valeriy Shmarov stressed, favors bilateral military cooperation and so-called "soft" forms of cooperation with NATO.

According to Jan Sitek, Slovakia values Ukraine's policy of restraint with regard to the desire by east European countries to join NATO.

The defense ministers of both countries also agreed that a subdivision of the Slovak Army would take part in the multinational peacekeeping exercises, "Peace Shield 96", that will be held in Ukraine in June.

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Ukraine: Defense Minister Views NATO Expansion

WS0404081496 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0031 GMT 4 Apr 96

[By Oleksandr Pukhov, "Special to INTELNEWS"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, April 3 — NATO's expansion to the east will have to wait until next century, Ukrainian Defense Minister Valeriy Shmarov said after talks with his Slovakian counterpart, Jan Sitek, on Tuesday in Bratislava.

Sitek, characterizing his country's relationship with Ukraine as "very good," said that these relations are determined by non-conflict history of the two nations as well as the similarity of processes of state construction.

Sitek noted that the both countries possess serious basis for military-scientific research and for designing new military hardware. In the course of talks the two agreed to establish groups of specialists which should study capacities of military-repairing plants of the countries.

The ministers noted that cooperation in aviation, anti-aircraft defense, aircraft repairing, military map-drawing in the framework of NATO's Partnership for Peace program is promising. Sitek stressed that bilateral cooperation creates basis for strengthening security in the Europe.

Speaking on NATO's expansion in the East, Shmarov said: "We will hardly witness sharp changes by the year 2000," adding that "NATO seems to share this opinion."

Ukraine: Foreign Ministry Briefing on Ties With NATO Viewed

AU0404114096 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[UKRINFORM report: "On the Special Partnership With NATO"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the eve of NATO's Secretary General Javier Solana's visits to central and eastern European countries, which is to start with a visit to Kiev, he pointed out in an interview for the media that NATO was going to establish close and deep bilateral relations with Ukraine, which will be more extensive than within the framework of "Partnership for Peace."

At today's briefing, commenting, at the request of journalists, on the prospects for further development of cooperation between Ukraine and NATO, Yuriy Serheyev, chief of the Information Administration at Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, emphasized that Ukraine is seeking a special partnership with the North Atlantic alliance. Our state is interested in a more flexible and extensive mechanism for cooperation with NATO and member countries of this organization. We mean, first and foremost, extending the political dialogue, the Ukrainian diplomat stressed.

Within the framework of NATO, a consultative mechanism for relations with Ukraine is already operating at various levels, Yuriy Serheyev went on to say. He also informed journalists that today consultations were being held at the level of political directors of the foreign ministries of NATO member countries in accordance with the formula "16 plus one." At these negotiations, the Ukrainian side is being represented by Yehor Kharchenko, chief of the Administration for Political Analysis and Planning at Ukraine's Foreign Ministry. It is scheduled to conduct an extensive exchange of opinions on issues of continental and global security, cooperation within the framework of "Partnership for Peace," and so on.

Ukraine can claim the role of NATO's special partner, in view of its important geopolitical position and its large demographic and economic potential. Besides, in this region, Ukraine is, as is acknowledged by the world and the European community, a balancing factor, added Yuriy Serheyev.

It was stressed that, in the context of developing cooperation with the North Atlantic alliance, Russia is also raising this issue in the same manner, namely by proceeding from the principle of a special partnership.

Ukraine: Cabinet Prepares Plan for Joining GATT, WTO

WS0404082396 Lvov INFOBANK in English 0641 GMT 4 Apr 96

[From the "News Service" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [No date as received] The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine by its resolution obliged Interdepartmental Commission on Ukraine's Joining the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and Entering the World Trade Organization (WTO) to prepare in April 1996 conception regarding tariff system of Ukraine. In second and third quarters of 1996 this Interdepartmental commission has to negotiate with potential Ukrainian partners rate reductions in compliance with GATT/WTO.

The plan of actions regarding Ukraine's joining GATT/WTO prepared by the Cabinet of Ministers provides to adjust Ukrainian legal norms to the norms established by these structures. Ukrainian legal norms concern:

— the regulation of the delivery of production for government needs (before June 1996);

— the licensing of imports (May 1996);

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— customs duty;

— protection of copyright;

— utilizing of statistical data in foreign economic activity (December 1996);

— the regulation of state-owned trade enterprises (June 1996).

In 1996 it is planned to prepare drafts of the following Laws of Ukraine: "On governmental support for the industry", "On the protection of topology of integral micro diagram," "On the protection of the right to geographic indications." [as received]

Third session of the working commission on Ukraine's joining GATT/WTO is planned to be held in June 1996 at headquarters of the World Trade Organization in Geneva.

Ukraine: Defense Minister on European, Russian Integration Processes

LD0304185496 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1600 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Our reporter Miroslav Mlynar reports about a visit to Slovakia by Ukrainian Defense Minister Valeriy Nikolayevich Shmarov:

[Mlynar] [passage omitted] The Ukrainian defense minister has used all his meetings to brief his partners about Ukraine's efforts and views concerning the current European integration process. Ukraine's attitude is clear: It wants to preserve its position as a country not belonging to any bloc but at the same time cooperating with all partners on the basis of mutual advantage. In this context Valeriy Shmarov spoke about the so-called integration process initiated by the Russian Federation.

Assessing this process at a news conference, he said: When speaking about the integration process of former states of the Soviet Union, we are only speaking about four countries. This process reflects their political will. If they build their alliance on a principle similar to that of the European Community, we would welcome it. Every state is entitled to this. However, I would like to emphasize that some extreme views are even lacking support in Russia itself. [passage omitted]

Ukraine: Kuchma Requests Foreign Aid for Resettlement

WS0304135896 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 1307 GMT 3 Apr 96

[From the "Current Events" feature; foreign names as received]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no date as received] — As reported to UKRINFORM from Ukraine's Permanent Mission to Office of UN and other international organizations in Geneva, this conference is convened on initiative of the Ukrainian government and the UN Development Project. 25 donor-countries and 17 international organizations participate.

The President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma sent a message of greetings to the conference participants. It emphasizes that since the moment of gaining independence, Ukraine has been continuously paying attention to the creation of appropriate economic and social conditions for settling deported peoples in Ukraine, restoring the rights of the deportees and compensating for the damages inflicted on them by the forced deportation from the Crimean peninsula. However, taking into consideration hard economic situation, Ukraine is not in a position to solve all these problems on her own and relies on the international support for the Ukrainian government's efforts in this important and noble deed.

The head of the Ukrainian delegation Vice-Premier Vasyl Durdynets addressed the conference with a detailed report on the situation in the Crimean Autonomous Republic and the Ukrainian government's policy concerning the deported Crimean Tatars and other nationalities returning to Ukraine. As of today, 252 thousand deportees returned to the country, according to Mr. Durdynets. Sizable funds channeled by the government notwithstanding, Ukraine cannot cope with these problems of her own. As the experts' estimates suggest, 60 thousand apartments or individual houses should be built for the deportees. Besides, there is a pressing need for schools, hospitals, roads, power transmission lines, other communal services, and new jobs for the deportees. Mr. Durdynets wound up his report by expressing confidence that the donor- countries' meeting would give an impetus to this noble deed and that the participating countries would foster the settlement of the deportees through the UN Crimean Integration and Development Project [UN CIDP].

The conference was also addressed by the Prime-Minister of the Crimean Autonomous Republic Arkadiy Demydenko and the Crimean-Tatar People's Mejlis Chairperson Mustafa Dzhemilev.

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Speaking at the conference, the OSCE High Commissioner in charge of problems of minor nationalities Van der Stoel, the UN CIDP Director for Europe and CIS countries A. Kreudering, the UN Resident Representative in Ukraine S. Browne, representatives of Turkey, Greece, Great Britain, Switzerland, USA, Netherlands, Norway, Canada, the UN High Commissioner in charge of deportees, UNICEF, UNESCO and other international organizations voiced high appraisal of Ukraine's activity, expressed their understanding of the problems facing her and declared the aspiration of their countries to support the UN CID Project.

Ukraine: Moroz Wants To Convene International Conference on Security

WS0404081796 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 0641 GMT 4 Apr 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no date as received] — On Wednesday, April 3, Verkhovna Rada [Supreme Council] Chairperson Oleksandr Moroz met in Kiev with Erik Ulfstedt, Finland's Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to Ukraine.

During the friendly talk the two officials discussed some issues of Finnish-Ukrainian bilateral relations.

In the first place, the Finnish envoy reiterated the earlier invitation to Mr. Moroz to visit Finland at the head of a Ukrainian parliamentary delegation. The Finnish Ambassador said that it would be desirable, if Mr. Moroz's official visit occurred either in late May of early June.

The Ambassador also stressed the great significance his country attaches to the Ukrainian parliament speaker's prospective visit to Finland.

In turn, Mr. Moroz noted the two nations' very dynamic interparliamentary relations. As the Ukrainian parliament speaker emphasized, Finland was the first nation with which Ukraine established a mixed parliamentary group.

The meeting's greater portion was devoted to Ukraine's initiative to convene an international conference in Kiev to discuss issues of European security and cooperation.

The idea of such a conference is believed to have been first formulated by Mr. Moroz himself. As the Finnish Ambassador stated, it has been met with interest on the part of his government. So, the Finnish diplomat asked the host party to elaborate on its details.

The Ukrainian parliament speaker presented his vision of the future conference as more broadly representative than the one which once was held in Helsinki, Finland's capital. The future conference should adopt such resolutions and make such decisions, which would be legally binding, Mr. Moroz said.

As he disclosed, he means to shortly send messages to foreign ambassadors accredited to Kiev to provide them with a detailed description of is proposal with regard to the conference.

As Mr. Moroz said, the conference will likely focus on such large-caliber problems, as international, interethnic and interconfessional relations, the status of national minorities, economic stabilization and cooperation, and military-defense alliances and blocs. All these were generalized by the Ukrainian parliamentary speaker as Europe's security mechanisms for the 21st century.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Naval Personnel Not Receiving Wages; No Funds for Food

WS0404081696 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0031 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sevastopol, April 3 — Ukraine's Naval personnel have not yet received February wages, and Navy headquarters reported Wednesday that the sailors may not be paid for the months of March and April, as well.

Headquarters reported that December and January wages were paid with a month's delay and the fleet lacks KBV700 billion for paying, off February and March wages. In addition, the Naval office said that the fleet also lacks funds for the purchase of basic items such as food.

Ukraine: Kuchma 'Determined' To Prevent Return to Old Constitution

LD0304170696 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1210 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [no date as received] — "If the new Ukrainian Constitution is not approved by June, the constitutional treaty will remain in force," deputy head of the presidential administration Volodymyr Lytvyn told a briefing. He said the president would "use a wide range of measures, from political to criminal" to prevent a return to the 1978 constitution.

This determination should not be interpreted as a threat to dissolve the Supreme Council, Lytvyn stressed. On the contrary, in his annual address to parliament [on 2 April], President Kuchma called for unity among deputies to adopt the constitution soon.

First aide to the president Volodymyr Kuznetsov told journalists that inflation in March was forecast to stay

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at 4 percent, and inflationary indicators would not be revised. Echoing the president's address, he confirmed the need to cut taxes and introduce differentiated rates so as not to put the entire tax burden on the Ukrainian population. The first step toward differentiated taxation will be the introduction of property tax in the near future.

Elaborating on Kuchma's statement about the existence of dissidents in the government, Kuznetsov said: "Indeed, there are dissidents in the government." He advised officials to be clear about their aims in politics and leave government positions if their views differed from the policy of the head of state. He predicted a sweeping administrative reform after the adoption of the constitution.

Ukraine: Aide Says Kuchma Report No Reason for 'Political Struggle'

LD0304202796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1536 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [no dateline as received] The annual report to parliament President Kuchma made on Tuesday must not become a reason for political struggle, first presidential aide Vladimir Kuznetsov has said.

As he spoke at a briefing at the presidential office on Tuesday, Kuznetsov said that "we would like to use that report as a means to coordinate actions by various branches of power."

Kuznetsov said that the "road of confrontation between branches of power would lead into a political stalemate and that even if they manage to find a way out of that stalemate, none of the current politicians will save face."

Kuznetsov said that as he dwelt upon dissidence in the government, the president had in mind certain officials at functional departments of the Cabinet of Ministers who openly declared their disagreement with the leadership's policy.

Among others the president referred to the head of the Center for Development and Economic Reconstruction at the Cabinet of Ministers, Vladimir Naidenov, who had published several critical articles in the press, including the one entitled "Economic Crash-Political Consequences."

"Once the decision has been made, it must be accomplished," Kuznetsov said about the direct participation of the aforesaid official in drafting economic legal acts.

The presidential aide also said Kuchma believed that those who disagreed with government and presidential policies, must tender their resignation and engage in public politics.

IF note: In his report to parliament Kuchma described as impermissible dissidence in the bodies of power and said that some government members dared to take positions running counter to the already made government decisions. "Such dissidence costs the country dearly and we shall not tolerate it any longer," Kuchma said.

As he answered questions at the briefing, the deputy chief of the presidential staff Vladimir Litvin said that if no fundamental law was adopted by June 8, the Constitutional Treaty would stay in effect. Litvin said that the president as the safeguard of the constitution would take every measure to prevent legal abuse.

Litvin asked journalists to avoid building up tensions in relations between branches of power and voiced the certainty that a considerable number of law-makers would not find it possible to restore the Constitution of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

IF note: Ukrainian parliamentary speaker Aleksandr Moroz said earlier that if the new constitution fails to be adopted by June 8 1996, the operation of the Constitutional Treaty between the president and parliament of June 8 1995 would be suspended and the previous Ukrainian constitution would take effect again.

Ukraine: Chernobyl Nuclear Plant Output Exceeds Plan

LD0304151196 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 0820 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev Region — The Chernobyl nuclear power plant produced 1,266.4 million kWh of energy in March, exceeding projected output figures by 2.2 percent, the plant's chief engineer Vitaliy Tovstonohov told UNIAN.

Only the first and third generating sets were active, while set No 2 was shut for maintenance. No breach of safety standards was recorded. Monitored parameters at the Shelter facility remained normal.

Ukraine: Crimean Parliament Approves Referendum on Status

LD0304172496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1242 GMT 3 Apr 96

["INTERFAX-UKRAINE" news item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Simferopol, April 3 (Interfax-Ukraine) — The issue of lifting the moratorium on a referendum on Crimea's status has been put on the agenda of the fourth session of the Crimean Supreme Council.

A decision to this effect was taken yesterday at the proposal by MP Ivan Yeroshkin.

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Out of the 73 parliamentarians present in the hall, 50 voted for the decision. The Crimean parliament has a membership of 97.

Crimean Vice Speaker Yuriy Podkopayev told newsmen that Kiev must not worry about the above-said decision. "We should give Kiev an occasion to examine our constitution, rather than drag out its endorsement", he said and added that the examination in Crimea's parliament of issues involved in the referendum would depend on the endorsement of the constitution of Crimea by the parliament of Ukraine.

Y. Podkopayev said that Crimean parliamentary leaders "are working out" the submission of Crimea's constitution to a Crimea-wide referendum.

The more rights the Crimean constitution seals, the less will Kiev hear about separatism, the vice speaker added.

Mykhailo Bakharev, parliament presidium member, told newsmen that the issue "has come to a head", and the moratorium must be lifted. Nevertheless, he believes, the Crimean parliament should first pass a resolution on a legal outcome of this move. In his view, if at the referendum the Crimeans support an independent Republic of Crimea, the autonomy's constitution dated May 6, 1992, will have to be re-established in full, and a delegation formed up to conclude a treaty on distribution of powers with Ukraine.

M. Bakharev also said that the endorsement of the Ukrainian Law "Of the constitution of the Republic of Crimea" in second reading by Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada will influence the examination the moratorium issue.

The moratorium on calling an all-Crimean referendum on the status of the peninsula was imposed under the former Crimean Supreme Council decision in summer 1992.

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Belarus

Belarus: 'Small Town' Considered for Russia-Belarus Headquarters

MK0304131896 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Konstantin Katanyan: "New Capital for New Community?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Chances are that the newly created Community of Sovereign Republics could in the future evolve into some sort of supra-state structure, an idea constantly let out of the bag by Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka. Although the Kremlin press service and Yeltsin's aides just as constantly deny this idea, those in the political corridors of both states' like to bandy about the idea of supra-state agencies (with some, which is not ruled out, imagining themselves already in these agencies) and of the possible capital of the Community.

"Big cities are off," stated Minsk Federation Council Chairman Yegor Stroyev to a question from your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observer on the future capital of the Russia-Belarus union. The Federation Council speaker recalled that the Council of Europe's headquarters is not in Paris, nor in Bonn, nor in London. Incidentally, the same is true of the European Union.

Therefore, Stroyev continued, Russia and Belarus could also agree to locate their supra-state structures in the small town of Izyaslavl 27 km from Minsk.

Stroyev has already agreed to this idea with Belarus Supreme Council Chairman Semen Sharetskiy, who says that Izyaslavl is all right in terms of its ecology and there are conditions for accommodating the newly formed agencies. The rich history of this small locality will also help along joint work to forge closer ties between Russia and Belarus. [passage omitted].

Belarus: Defense Minister Views Treaty With Russia

WS0304131796 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1200 GMT 3 Apr 96

[Interview with Belarusian Defense Minister Leanid Maltsaw, by Aleh Mikhalevich; place and date not given; in Russian — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Maltsaw] The Belarusian-Russian treaty gives us an opportunity to better resolve military issues, those of our Republic's security. At the same time — I would like to underline — our Armed Forces will remain absolutely independent. The Belarusian Armed Forces will remain the Armed Forces of an independent state and will be subordinated to the president of the Republic, who is their commander in chief. I would also like to underline that in accordance with our legislation and constitution, despite the signature of the treaty, not a single person will serve beyond the Belarusian borders. Nobody should speculate on this basis, to the effect that our men will be sent to Chechnya or somewhere else. Nobody will go anywhere. They will serve in Belarus, in line with the territorial principle of manning the Army, which means as close to their homes as possible. Nothing will change in this respect.

On the other hand, we will resolve all issues in close interaction with the Russian Army.

[Mikhalevich] What will the Belarusian Armed Forces gain from the treaty?

[Maltsaw] First, the condition of the Armed Forces depends on the economic situation in the Republic. Given that Belarus' economic situation may significantly improve due to the fact that ties disrupted by force will be restored, this will have a direct effect on the Armed Forces. However, this is only one side of the issue. The other is: Our Armed Forces will be able to use Russian test ranges for free. The point is that we do not have test ranges for long-range antiaircraft weapons; only Russia has them. We have already signed an appropriate agreement. We also will be able to train our military personnel in Russia for free. We have opened our own Military Academy, but it just does not make sense to open a new faculty every time we need two or three specialists of some kind. This would be a bad idea, for we can train those specialists in Russia. We will receive the opportunity to resolve many issues in the security area jointly with Russia, including in the international arena.

Still, I would like to emphasize again that the treaty does not infringe on our independence and does not mean what people fear most — that we will send our servicemen somewhere. I underline again: We are not going to send anybody anywhere. In strict accordance with the Belarusian Constitution, the Law on Defense, and the Law on the Armed Forces, we will serve and ensure security on our territory.

Belarus: Politicians, Public Praise Treaty With Russia

WS0404103796 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0300 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The signing of the Russian-Belarusian treaty by the Russian and Belarusian presidents, Boris Yeltsin and Alyaksandr Lukashenka, respectively, have had broad repercussions in society.

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The Agrarian faction in the Belarusian parliament will vote for the ratification of this document, faction leader Mechyslaw Hiruts has stated. In his opinion, the Communist and the Accord factions also will support the treaty, and it will be ratified by the Supreme Soviet as a whole. Mechyslaw Hiruts has no doubts that on 2 April an important step was taken to unite the two peoples, a step which will improve the economic situation and positively affect people's lives in general.

The initiatives of the Belarusian and Russian presidents which resulted in the signing of the treaty on establishing the Community [of Sovereign Republics] have not destroyed the old CIS structure, but have elevated it to a new level of integration, according to Uladzimir Mishchuk, deputy chairman of the Parliamentary Commission for Human Rights, Ethnic Issues, Mass Media, and Relations With Public Associations and Religious Organizations.

Syarhey Daromin, first secretary of the Belarusian Youth Union, said that he personally always regretted that such a strong and powerful state as the Soviet Union had disintegrated. At the same time, he thinks that it is necessary to conduct serious economic reforms in Belarus, so that it can stand on its own feet and become a strong state. We are afraid that Belarus will be perceived as a poor relative.

In connection with the signing of the treaty between Russia and Belarus, President Alyaksandr Lukashenka has been receiving telegrams, letters, and postcards. What do people write to the Belarusian president? Here are a few examples.

Thanks to you, tens of millions of people saw a ray of light in a dark czardom, writes Aleksandr Lapukhin from Sevastopol. The Sklyarovs family from Murmansk: Dear Alyaksandr Ryhoravich, thank you for returning the motherland to the Belarusians and residents of the north. We wish you good health, happiness, and strength to continue the good cause for the benefit of your people. Here is another telegram: Esteemed Alyaksandr Ryhoravich, the Hrodna oblast and city branch of the Belarusian Patriotic Movement political party unanimously supports your course toward the unification of Slavic peoples and the signing of the union treaty with fraternal Russia.

UN Deputy Secretary General Uladzimir Pyatrowski has described the international community's reaction to integration processes in Russia as very positive. In his opinion, the international community's positive reaction can be explained by the fact that in the current mutually dependent world, economic and cultural integration is simply essential. Integration is a demand of the world's life, and it is currently being observed in various parts of the world.

Belarus: Minsk Authorities Ban Protest of Russia-Belarus Treaty

MM0404082696 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 2

[Report by Aleksandr Starikevich: "Belarusian People's Front Demands More Information on Treaty"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The signing of new agreements between Moscow and Minsk has certainly not been welcomed with enthusiasm by everyone in Belarus. A protest action against the Russian-Belarusian treaty was to have been held in Minsk's Independence Square on the evening of 2 April.

Clearly, it was not going to be a spontaneous event. A number of citizens informed the city executive committee of their intention to stage a picket, and Belarusian Supreme Soviet Deputies Pavel Daneyka and Pavel Znavets informed it of their intention to hold a meeting with voters. Both measures were banned by the city executive committee.

The authorities have also taken other preventive measures. The Minsk City Prosecutor's Office carried out a search of the Belarusian People's Front [BPF] headquarters on 1 April. Moreover, the electricity in the BPF office was cut off prior to the search, so the law enforcement personnel concerned were forced to work with flashlights. The object of the search was to confiscate leaflets and duplicating equipment. The headquarters are now under surveillance, according to the people who work there.

"This measure was initiated by citizens and aimed to preserve the country's independence," Vycheslaw Siwchyk, senior secretary of the BPF Council, said in response to a question by your IZVESTIYA correspondent about the BPF's role in this action. "As it accords with our prescribed aims, it has the support of the BPF. But our main task is to prevent bloodshed. We have information that the authorities are also preparing for picketing — the police have been issued with live cartridges. Either this information is being specially fed to us for intimidation purposes, or it is true."

Siwchyk's words are partly confirmed by a statement broadcast on state radio on the morning of 2 April: It was announced on behalf of the Internal Affairs Ministry that every method, including force, would be used against anyone taking part in an unsanctioned rally.

"Tension is being provoked by the information vacuum, or sometimes by outright disinformation," Viktar Hanchar, a well-known Belarusian political figure and one

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of the leaders of the United Citizens' Party, told your IZVESTIYA correspondent. "If the republic's citizens learn about the signing of some treaty from conflicting sources and if the information given out by the president himself keeps changing in the course of a fortnight, the agitation caused by this lack of reliable information is perfectly understandable. Heaven forbid that we should see outrages committed. But I do feel alarmed, because it is obvious even now that these actions have split our society."

It is possible that BPF leaders Zyanon Paznyak and Syarhey Naumchyk (currently in Kiev) will be here by evening, as they are wanted in Minsk for organizing a rally on 24 March.

Belarus: Foreign Minister Arrives in Beijing, To Meet Qian Qichen

LD0404063596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0612 GMT 4 Apr 96

[By Marat Abulkhatin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BEIJING April 4 (ITAR-TASS) — To broaden and strengthen bilateral cooperation, including that in the political field, is the principal purpose of Belarus Foreign Minister Uladzimir Syanko, who arrived here on Thursday for a five-day official visit.

Syanko is to hold talks with his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen. The Chinese side is expected to devote much attention to matters concerning the Treaty on the Founding of a Community of Belarus and Russia, signed in Moscow on April 2.

Much attention will be given to matters concerning cooperation between Russia and China in the international arena. The two ministers are also to exchange views on ways to refine cooperation and on a quest for new orientations in the development of trade-and-economic cooperation.

Moldova

Moldova: Court Declares Snegur's Edict Unconstitutional

LD0404121896 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1135 GMT 4 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Chisinau, 4 Apr — The Constitutional Court of Moldova today declared unconstitutional the edict of President Mircea Snegur, dismissing Defense Minister Pavel Creanga from his post.

The court's verdict stresses that the president violated Article 82 of the Constitution, according to which he replaces cabinet ministers only after consultations with the prime minister and parliamentary majority. In the given case he failed to do this.

Explaining his position earlier, Snegur expressed his opinion that as supreme commander he had the right to dismiss the leadership of the Armed Forces without implementing this procedure. He did, however, add that he would be bound by the decision of the Constitutional Court.

Moldova: Snegur-Led Delegation Departs for Estonia, Lithuania

AU0304122896 Chisinau INFOTAG in English 1945 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, 2 April (INFOTAG) — An official Moldovan delegation headed by President Mircea Snegur left today for official visits to the Baltic states. On 2 and 3 April they will stay in Estonia, and on 4 and 5 April in Lithuania.

In Tallinn and Vilnius Mircea Snegur will meet with the presidents, parliament chairmen, and prime ministers of the two states. Governmental delegations will negotiate cooperation and other issues of mutual interest.

President Snegur stated today at the Chisinau airport that the two visits will be in full harmony with Moldova's foreign policy concept, which is consistently conducted by the republic and is aimed at consolidating and developing all-round relations with all countries.

In Tallinn, the sides will sign a basic political statement on mutual understanding, friendship, and cooperation between Moldova and Estonia, which document will create a basis and appropriate legal framework for the bilateral cooperation. The visit also includes signing of a protocol of cooperation between the ministries of foreign affairs, an intergovernmental agreement on cultural cooperation, and an agreement on exchange of information between state-owned news agencies.

The basic treaty between Moldova and Lithuania was signed last year during the visit to Chisinau of Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas. Now in Vilnius the sides will conclude agreements on trade and economic relations, on cooperation between the interior ministries in organized crime prevention, and on cooperation in the air transport field.

Moldova: Speaker Says Russia-Belarus Union 'Is Their Own Business'

LD0304170596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1218 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chisinau, April 3 (INTERFAX) — The creation of the Community of sovereign

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republics by Russia and Belarus is their own business and does not affect Moldova, Moldovan Parliamentary Speaker Petr Luchinskiy told Interfax in an exclusive interview Wednesday.

"The Community is an internal affair of the Russian and Belarussian governments and in no way infringes on the sovereignty, independence, or interests of Moldova," he said. "The agreement reflects the policies of the two governments at the present historical moment.

"Other CIS member-countries are holding their own foreign policy and foreign economic lines," Luchinsky said. "The CIS has not exhausted all its possibilities for closes economic ties, and Moldova is interested in such cooperation, but without the loss of sovereignty and independence."

"The realization of more concrete and specific joint economic programs, as well as the fulfillment of the agreements already made within the CIS" is necessary for this to occur, he said.

"The attempts to organize new structures within the framework of the CIS shows that current relations within the Commonwealth are not very effective," Luchinskiy said. The agreement signed March 29 between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, as well as the April 2 SSR agreement are proof, he said.

"Time will tell how viable these agreements are," he said. "One thing is certain — they do not concern Moldova's interests, its independence, or its sovereignty."

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Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Foreign Minister Departs for Visit to Iran

LD0204183696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1433 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ALMATY, Apr 2 (INTERFAX)—Kazakh Foreign Minister Qasymzhomart Toqayev left Tuesday on an official visit to Iran.

According to Kazakhstan's Foreign Ministry press service, Toqayev is expected to negotiate with Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati. Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani is likely to receive Tokayev.

The officials will discuss trade-economic relations between Kazakhstan and Iran and problems of regional cooperation. In addition, the parties will discuss issues related to a festive opening of the railway section Tedzhen-Serakhs-Meshkhed. Heads of states and governments of this region are expected to attend this ceremony. Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev plans to come to the opening ceremony.

The officials will also discuss problems of the status of the Caspian Sea and possibility to transport Kazakh oil to Iran's north by tankers through the Caspian Sea, competent sources told Interfax.

Toqayev will also participate in opening of Kazakhstan's general consulate in Meshkhed.

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Considered as Chechen Conflict Arbiter

MK0404055096 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Apr 96 p 3

[NEGA report]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the words of Amanchi Gunashev, leader of the Chechen-Ingush "Vaynakh" society in Kazakhstan, hopes of ending the war in Chechnya are pinned on Nursultan Nazarbayev's mediation. "A man who enjoys great prestige in both Chechnya and Moscow, he can do much here," said Mr. Gunashev.

The main ideologist of the "Azat" national-radical movement, Khasen Khozha-Akhmet, stated that Boris Yeltsin's proposal on mediation by the Kazakh president in settling the Chechen conflict is evidence of the fact that the Russian Federation president recognizes that Chechnya is a separate state rather than part of Russia. "We do not care who is going to be a mediator — let it be Nazarbayev — as long as the mediation puts an end to the war," said Khasen Khozha-Akhmet.

Kazakhstan: Report on Visit by U.S. Military Delegation

LD0404082496 Almaty Kazakh Television First Program Network in Russian 1400 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A U.S. military delegation led by Robert Hunter, U.S. envoy to NATO, arrived in Almaty on 3 April on a short visit.

He met Nurlan Danenov [name as heard], the first deputy foreign minister of the republic, in the afternoon. During the talks they discussed international and regional security and the development of bilateral relations in the defense sphere. Particular emphasis was placed on the significance of the agreement to extend integration, which was signed by the presidents of four countries in Moscow on Friday [29 March, by the presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Belarus]. The U.S. side approved of Kazakhstan's plan to join the Partnership For Peace program and expressed their willingness to grant necessary assistance in creating a battalion of peacekeeping forces of the Central Asian states under UN auspices.

After that Mr. Hunter met Defense Minister Alibek Kasymov.

The delegation's schedule for the trip includes meetings in Bishkek, Tashkent, and Ashgabat.

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Edict Allows Kazakhs To De-Russify Their Names

LD0404102296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2317 GMT 3 Apr 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty, 4 Apr (ITAR-TASS) — Citizens of Kazakhstan of Kazakh nationality have been given the opportunity to change their surnames and patronymics. Under an edict issued by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev which came into force today, all Kazakhs are allowed to bring the spelling of their names into line with popular traditions.

Citizens of Kazakh nationality now have the right to remove the Russian endings "ov", "ova", "in", and "ina" and others from their surnames while retaining the basic root, and to add the endings "uly" or "kyzy", according to gender, to their father's names.

The innovation is expected to be brought into general use under a simplified procedure through the issue of passports and identity cards. It does not affect the rights and responsibilities of citizens of Kazakh nationality with surnames and patronymics spelt in the previous way. No alterations will be made to civic registration documents.

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Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Rakhmanov Welcomes Russia-Belarus Treaty

LD0404105196 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 0800 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The signing of an agreement between Belarus and the Russian Federation is supported in many CIS countries, particularly in Tajikistan. The president's press secretary, Zafar Saidov, said the following on this matter:

[begin Saidov recording] Emomali Rakhmanov, president of the Republic of Tajikistan, welcomes the signing of the agreement between Russia and Belarus to establish a community of independent republics.

According to the president of the Republic of Tajikistan, convergence among the CIS countries should take on the highest form and a stable and irreversible character. As is known, Tajikistan has always advocated the establishment of a definitive and single economic, defense, humanitarian, cultural, and information (?union) among the CIS countries and will continue to advocate this.

At present the president of the Republic of Tajikistan thinks that most of the CIS countries, particularly the Republic of Tajikistan, are ready to establish a more complete and stronger union than the present CIS, and that means a union of the CIS countries. [end recording]

Tajikistan: Rakhmanov Meets With Russian Security Service Director

LD0304192296 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1508 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dushanbe, 3 Apr (ITAR-TASS) — The character of, and outlook for, interaction between Tajik and Russian special services in combating organized crime, rampaging terrorism, and drugs and arms smuggling have been discussed during a meeting between Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov and Army General Mikhail Barsukov, director of the Russian Federal Security Service. The latter arrived in Dushanbe today to take part in a meeting of the heads of CIS special services, which is to open on 4 April.

The meeting was held behind closed doors. However, according to Zafar Saydov, the Tajik president's press secretary, the meeting was frank and friendly. At the request of the director of the Federal Security Service, the Tajik leader spoke of the measures being taken by the Tajik leadership to stabilize the sociopolitical situation, achieve national reconciliation, and solve the republic's protracted economic crisis.

Tajikistan: President Dismisses, Appoints Advisers, Representatives

LD0404085796 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Tajik 0500 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Decrees by the president of the Republic of Tajikistan:

In accordance with Article 69 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, I decree:

Rahimjon Ghafurov [name as heard] is relieved of the post of state adviser to the president of the Republic of Tajikistan for economic matters in connection with his transfer to another post.

President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmanov

In accordance with Article 69 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, I decree:

Olim Sobirovich Rahimov [name as heard] is appointed permanent and authorized representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the official and other bodies of the CIS countries.

President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmanov

In accordance with Article 69 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, I decree:

Abdujalil Ahadovich Samadov [Jamshed Karimov's predecessor as Tajik prime minister] is relieved of the post of authorized representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the collegium of the intergovernmental economic committee of the economic union [as heard] for unsatisfactory implementation of the functions entrusted to him and for not justifying the confidence of the leadership of the Republic of Tajikistan.

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President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmanov

In accordance with Article 69 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, I decree:

Rustam Mirzoyev [name as heard] is relieved of the post of permanent and authorized representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the official and other bodies of the CIS countries.

President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmanov.

In accordance with Article 69 of the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, I decree:

Shuhrat Muzaffarovich Sultonov [name as heard] is appointed authorized representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the collegium of the intergovernmental economic committee of the economic union.

President of the Republic of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmanov.

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Armenia

Armenia: Press Secretary Calls Karabakh Negotiations 'Difficult'

NC0304194696 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1405 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, April 3 (NOYAN TAPAN) — Settlement of the Karabakh conflict is "the main problem and Levon Ter-Petrosyan pays great attention to it", Presidential Press Secretary Levon Zurabyan said Tuesday [2 April]. According to him, it is important that all the conflicting sides connect the solution of the problem with negotiations.

Zurabyan also reported that negotiations within the framework of OSCE and a direct dialogue [Armenian president's special adviser Zhirayr] Liparityan [Azerbaijani president's adviser on foreign policy Vafa] Guluzade are still under way. [sentence as received] The latest meeting took place March 18 in Bonn. He noted that due to some technical causes regular London meeting was postponed and will take place later.

"Negotiations are tense and difficult", Mr. Zurabyan noted.

Armenia: Foreign Minister Reports on Moscow NKR Negotiations

NC0304095996 Yerevan SNARK in English 1358 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yerevan, April 2, (SNARK) — Today, Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanyan who headed Armenia's delegation to the Moscow negotiations on the Karabakh conflict, held a press conference in Yerevan. According to him, the latest talks in Moscow once again proved that attempts to intensify the negotiation process by all means are futile.

According to Oskanyan, no clause of the Great Political Agreement had been brokered during the Moscow meeting.

Two key issues, the status and security of Nagorno-Karabakh, were singled out in Moscow.

The discussion of the status was more like an exchange of opinions and Azerbaijan's position gives no hope that the stances of belligerents could be brought closer to one another, Oskanyan believes. Azerbaijan abuses the principal of territorial integrity and the corresponding clauses of the Azeri Constitution restrict the possibility of further meaningful consideration of the issue.

The discussions over the NKR [Nagorno-Karabakh Republic] security although more active failed to give any results as well. The principal discord was that Azerbaijan regards the Karabakh problem as its conflict with Armenia. Therefore, Azerbaijan is trying to solve the security issue in the context of military balance between the two countries referring to the agreement on conventional armaments in Europe. Azerbaijan attempts to expand the front line in the border with Armenia including between Armenia and Nakhichevan and realize there military arrangements stipulated by the Great Agreement.

Oskanyan noted similar approach is unacceptable for Armenia. Armenia's stance is that the conflict zone and front line should pass along Nagorno-Karabakh's border with Azerbaijan, and security measures as well as military guarantees must be taken in this area to provide the NKR safety.

In particular, regarding the demilitarization of certain territories Azerbaijan thinks it should be symmetrical, i.e. Karabakh's territory must be demilitarized as well. Armenia in turn believes, the demilitarization concerns only Azeri territories which should be liberated.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan: 20 Jan Explosion Said Caused by 'Sadval', Special Services

NC0304101096 Baku TURAN in English 0511 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku, 2 Apr 96, (TURAN) — On March 19, 1994 there was explosion in the train on "20 January" Baku's metro station. 14 people died and 49 were injured during explosion.

Azerbaijan's security services have found that this act of terrorism has been committed by the members of Lezghin separatist organization "Sadval," reads official information of Azerbaijan's Ministry of National Security. It has been also found out that Armenia's special services have prepared and implemented this act. Basing on incontrovertible evidence, the investigation bodies have detained five members of "Sadval" organization implicated in organization of this act of terrorism. These persons said that they have prepared to the acts of terrorism on large industrial objects of Azerbaijan.

The investigation ascertained that beginning in 1992 Armenia's special services have established contact with the members of Savdal and instigated them to implementation of acts of terrorism in Azerbaijan. As a result of collusion, Armenian special services started training of saboteurs-members of "Sadval". The training was held from April to May, 1992 on the military base in Lusoker district of Armenia's Nairi region. [place names as received] One of the terrorists passed through the training, Oktay Dadreoglu Kurbanov, died during

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implementation of the act of terrorism on "20 January" metro station. Six more persons from this group have been arrested and they are currently under examination.

Moreover, in April, 1992 Armenian special services sent the helicopter with ammunitions and weapons to the members of "Sadval" in Dagestan.

The purpose of the acts of terrorism by "Sadval" members was an attempt to create new area of separatism on the north of Azerbaijan and to make conflict between Azeris and Lezghins.

"Armenia's activities give the right to accuse it of the state terrorism and the crimes of "Sadval" give the reason to demand prohibition of activities of this organization", the information of Azerbaijan's Ministry of National Security reads.

"Sadval" was founded in 1990 in Dagestan. It unites the Lezghins coming out for creation of independent Lezghin state. The members of this organization think that the Government Lezghistan must be established on the north of Azerbaijan and south of Dagestan, the places with dominant Lezghin population.

The number of Lezghins in Azerbaijan reaches 150,000-200,000, while in Dagestan this number is 100,000.

Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze Visits Turkey To Discuss Relations

LD0304123096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1033 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, April 3 (INTERFAX) — The Georgian delegation headed by President Eduard Shevardnadze has flown to Turkey on a two-day official visit.

A package of documents aimed at further deepening of mutual relations between Georgia and Turkey, including an agreement on mutual recognition of the Georgian-Turkish border, is likely to be signed in Ankara.

During his negotiations with Turkish President Suleyman Demirel, Shevardnadze will discuss issues related to construction of a pipeline from the Azerbaijani fields in the Caspian Sea, regional problems and the Georgian president's initiative to establish peace and stability in the Caucasus, called Peaceful Caucasus.

Shevardnadze is supposed to address the Turkish parliament and meet with representatives of business circles.

According to Georgia's State Statistics Department, Georgia has the greatest volume of its foreign turnover with Turkey, about 21 percent. Azerbaijan, Romania and Russia lag behind by more than two times. At the same time export of Turkish products to Georgia exceeds its import by almost four times.

Georgia: Shevardnadze, Demirel Hold Talks in Ankara

LD0304223696 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in 1535 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ankara — Turkish President Suleyman Demirel today invited the visiting Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze to the Chankaya presidential tower. A reception was held in honor of the eminent guest and the Georgian delegation. A one-to-one meeting took place between the two presidents, which dealt with regional problems, the Georgian oil pipeline, and important issues concerning Turkish-Georgian relations and cooperation.

Later today, the Georgian president laid wreaths at the Ataturk monument and made an entry into the guestbook at the Ataturk mausoleum. Also today, the Georgian president met turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz.

The Georgian government delegation met Turkish government officials today to finalize a package of agreements.

In the evening, a dinner was held in honor of the eminent guest and the Georgian delegation.

Tomorrow, the two countries will sign 16 cooperation agreements and will issue a joint declaration.

Georgia: Foreign Minister Criticizes CIS Peacekeeping Role

LD0304115596 Tbilisi SAKINFORM in Russian 1015 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Georgian Foreign Minister Irakli Menagharishvili returned to Tbilisi late on 2 April after attending a meeting of CIS foreign ministers in Moscow. Irakli Menagharishvili told a Sakinform correspondent that at the meeting he raised the issue of a peace settlement in Abkhazia. He criticized the operation of the CIS peacekeeping forces in the conflict zone, stressing that unless their mandate was expanded their further stay in Abkhazia would be totally pointless. The Georgian foreign minister's position was supported by his counterparts from Ukraine and Azerbaijan.

Georgia: Parliament Ratifies Accord To Build Caspian Oil Pipeline

LD0204185096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1433 GMT 2 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TBILISI, April 2 (INTERFAX) — The Georgian parliament has ratified a

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Georgian-Azerbaijani accord to build and use a pipeline for transporting crude oil from Caspian offshore fields through Georgia.

The Georgian and Azerbaijani presidents had signed the accord in early March.

Meanwhile, some deputies voiced dissatisfaction with the low oil transit rate. Georgia will gain $0.17, while Russia will gain $2.46 per barrel of crude oil exported by its northern route, they told the parliamentary session.

President of Georgia's International Petroleum Corporation Georgiy Chanturiya explained the gap in profits by the need to invest major amounts in the construction of the Georgian pipeline, while the Russian one is virtually ready.

The deputies also had claims on the economic calculations, under which Georgia will obtain only $8 million of profits a year.

The debate on Nagorno-Karabakh settlement, earlier scheduled for Tuesday, was postponed until April 5-6 because of Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze's visit to Turkey on Wednesday, Parliamentary Chairman Zurab Zhvania said.

Georgia: Unidentified Person Warns of Bomb in Justice Ministry

LD0404125096 Tbilisi IPRINDA in Russian 1210 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tbilisi, 4 Apr — An IPRINDA correspondent reports that an unidentified person phoned the Georgian Justice Ministry this afternoon and said that there was an explosive device planted in the ministry building. Representatives of the security and interior ministries are at the Justice Ministry building. Employees of the ministry have been evacuated. The information was confirmed by the Ministry of State Security.

Justice Ministry employees assume that the incident is related to the current conflict situation in the Rustaveli Society [sociopolitical organization] which arose after the previous leadership of the society, namely former Georgian prime minister Tengiz Sigua was not included in the new Rustaveli Society established by an action group. The new society was registered in the Justice Ministry.

Georgia: Chibirov Says Shevardnadze Behind Tskhinvali 'Putsch'

AU0404125296 Tbilisi REZONANSI in Georgian 26-27 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Report by Turman Turmanidze specially for REZONANSI from Tskhinvali: "Chibirov Accuses Shevardnadze of Organizing Tskhinvali 'Putsch'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] REZONANSI already informed readers at the end of February of the armed protest action against the self-proclaimed authorities in Tskhinvali, which forced their leader Ludvig Chibirov to submit his resignation to "parliament." Discussion of the question proceeded according to a preplanned scenario, as a result of which the self-proclaimed leader remained in his post.

At an emergency session, Chibirov presented his own concept of the reasons that gave rise to the situation that took shape. According to him, the opposition was presented with a motive to step up its activities as early as in January following the hike in bread prices. "This was followed by dissatisfaction on account of the fact that the police had ostensibly exceeded their powers. Then, rumors were spread about the appropriation of a 1.5 billion ruble credit," pointed out Chibirov. He said that, on 16 February, Forestry Industry Minister Chioyev had shot and killed with a firearm Tsadtaev, head of the Council of Ministers Municipal Services. "In view of the fact that he was my relative and had been with me prior to the murder, they reached the conclusion that I had apparently ordered Tsadtaev to be killed," stated Chibirov. As he pointed out, he was also blamed when the opposition figure Alan Chioyev was murdered by his relative Teimuraz Zyukayev. "Is it my fault that my relatives are murderers?," stated Chibirov.

Then, the self-proclaimed leader criticized the leaders of the insurgents: "Teimuraz Tskhovrebov, of course, cannot forgive me that I created a state television [network] and his commercial television company lost its right to operate without control. His television company was covering events unilaterally," stated Chibirov. According to him, what was particularly alarming was the links his deputy Atsamaz Kabisov had with the insurgents: "I believe it was a serious mistake on my part that Kabisov was elected to the post of Supreme Council deputy chairman. To all intents and purposes, Kabisov did not work in the Supreme Council. Perhaps he wanted to, but his level of preparation did not enable him to do so. Moreover, his lack of responsibility is shown by the fact that he has not appeared at today's session," added Chibirov.

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This last phrase indicates a rare mastery of cynicism. The point is that, the night before, members of OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachment] detained Tskhovrebov and then went to Kabisov's house where there was firing from both sides. However, Kabisov managed to escape.

The head of the self-proclaimed authorities suspected Shevardnadze of having ordered the rebellion against him. "The signing of a memorandum is being prepared. We are awaiting the arrival of a high-ranking guest from Moscow. The question of the peacekeeping troops is being raised and, at that moment, as can be seen, the preplanned internal excesses occur. At the time of the rebellion, Shevardnadze told foreign journalists: '...this is Georgian territory and, if there is unrest there, we will be forced to send in our own forces and establish order....' I urge everyone to think about these words," stated Ludvig Chibirov.

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Estonia

Estonia: Vahi Urges Resolving Sea Border Issue With Latvia

LD0304155496 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1400 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the Latvian government's decision to establish a unilateral sea border running through the Gulf of Riga within which the Latvian fishermen may fish, Prime Minister Tiit Vahi has said the following: Estonia last week presented to Latvia a four-point proposal package, and Latvia has in essence rejected it. The leaders of Estonian and Latvian border talks delegations will meet in the near future and the Latvian side has promised to officially inform Estonia about which resolutions the Latvian government has adopted within the past few days regarding the sea border. Estonia will be able to adopt an official position once the Latvian side's official position has been handed over to Estonia. Estonia is convinced that the sea border issue must be resolved at the sea border talks between the two countries' delegations. Estonia must defend the lawful border of the Republic of Estonia. This has been reported by the government's press service.

Estonia: Vahi Receives Moldovan President for Talks

LD0304124196 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1000 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Estonian Prime Minister Tiit Vahi today received Moldovan President Mircea Snegur, who is on a state visit to Estonia, and an accompanying delegation. The talks were also attended by members of the Estonian government.

The meeting discussed Moldova's relations with Russia and the European Union. Snegur did not object to economic integration with CIS states but Moldova firmly denies the possibility of political integration.

Speaking about relations with NATO, Snegur said that the expansion of NATO does not represent a threat to anyone's security.

Tiit Vahi gave an overview of the development of Estonia's economy and of the opportunities for economic cooperation with Moldova.

Estonia: Presidential Office Discusses Issue of Joining EU

LD0304170896 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1600 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to criticism from the Lithuanian foreign minister, the Estonian presidential office stated today that when drawing up its policy on joining the European Union [EU] Estonia proceeds from the premise that this will not take place in groups. At the same time it was emphasized that this aspiration would not diminish to any degree the Baltic states' solidarity based on past shared experience of the Baltic countries and similarity of present-day problems. Whichever of the Baltic states is the first to join the EU, there is not the least doubt that, once a member, it will act in the spirit of Baltic solidarity and aid toward the other Baltic states' speedy EU membership.

However, Luigi Vittorio Ferraris, Italian deputy foreign minister, who is currently visiting Estonia, with Italy being the country which holds the EU presidency, said at his meeting today with Eino Tamm, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission in the Riigikogu, that the Baltic states are all of interest to the EU, and it is not likely for them to be admitted as full members individually. Ferraris considered it important that each Baltic country promote its economy and improve legislation but noted that when it comes to a political decision to be taken on their EU membership, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania will be viewed as a single entity.

Lithuania

Lithuania: World Bank Urges 'Tough' Economic, Social Measures

LD0304202396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1536 GMT 3 Apr 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Algirdas Brazauskas stands for gradual introduction of tough economic and social measures, following a proposal of the World Bank that Lithuania toughens its economic and social policy.

The proposal was put forward at a meeting of director of the World Bank's Department for Europe and Central Asia Basill Kavalskiy with Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas.

Kavalskiy urged the need to raise electricity tariffs, abandon easy-term credits and allocations for some agricultural productions, as well as cancel pensions to employed pensioners in order to improve Lithuania's financial and economic situation, according to presidential adviser for finances and economy Algimantas Jasinskas.

The president described the Lithuanian economic situation as "far from tragic" but admitted measures suggested by the Bank would help consolidate the financial and economic position of the Baltic republic. Brazauskas said they need "a transitional period for introduction of the measures," noted Jasinskas. He said Kavalskiy did not have essential objections to this plan.

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The meeting resulted in an agreement that the Lithuanian government and the Bank of Lithuania would make a final decision on improvement of the banking system by April 20.

The Lithuanian cabinet and the World Bank adopted a program against a banking crisis following the aggravated banking situation in Lithuania. They planned to merge two major Lithuanian commercial banks, namely the Lithuanian Joint Stock Innovation Bank and the Limimpeks, which were temporarily closed down due to their insolvency, as well as the non-liquid Vakaru Bankas. The non-liquid Aurabankas is liable for closure, and state commercial banks are to be restructured. The program will require some 1.3 billion lit ($325 million), according to preliminary estimations.

However, the reality is different from the plan. The three banks liable for merging have developed and started to implement their independent plans against the crisis.

In the words of Jasinskas, the World Bank representative approved of Lithuanian measures to overcome banking problems. The World Bank takes with understanding the desire of crisis banks to improve the situation on their own, said Kavalsky. A new mission of the World Bank will start working in Lithuania in the second half of April, estimate the situation and plans of the banks, and help take a decision on further measures.

Lithuania: Moldovan President Snegur Arrives in Vilnius

LD0404110896 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 4 Apr 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The beginning of Moldovan President Mircea Snegur's visit to Vilnius was delayed by more than two hours today. He arrived by plane from Tallinn just 15 minutes ago. Lidija Sabajevaite, spokeswoman for the Lithuanian president, said all meetings scheduled for Snegur for today will also be delayed. The protocol officials have coordinated the changes to the official program to this effect.

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